L. XXVII, No. 1 JULY, 1929 No. 105

JUL 12 1929

EVANSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
EVANSTON, ILL.

THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

GARRETT BIBLICAL
INSTITUTE LIBRARY
EVANSTON, ILL.

PUBLISHED BY
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

42135

Y. 27
1929/30

The Theosophical Quarterly

Subscription price, $1.00 per annum; single copies 25 cents

Published by The Theosophical Society
at 64 Washington Mews, New York, N. Y.

July; October; January; April

Address all communications to P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York

In Europe, single copies may be obtained from and subscriptions may be sent to John M. Watkins, 21 Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, London, W. C. 2, England; or to Mr. E. H. Lincoln, 9 Beaconsfield Road, Low Fell, Gateshead-on-Tyne, England, from whom all back numbers may be obtained. Annual subscription price, 6s., postpaid.

CONTENTS OF VOL. XXVII, NO. 1

July, 1929

	PAGE
NOTES AND COMMENTS	1
FRAGMENTS	11
THEOSOPHY	12
WAR MEMORIES, IV	21
CHHANDOGYA UPANISHAD	31
MY TWENTY-FIRST CONVENTION	40
ON THE SCREEN OF TIME	45
A HINDU CHÊLA'S DIARY. (Reprint)	58
T. S. ACTIVITIES: Convention Report; Letters of Greetings.	66
REVIEWS	108
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	111
OBITUARY	112

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

Entered as second-class matter September 5, 1923, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Copyright, 1929, by The Theosophical Society

NOTES AND COMMENTS

JULY, 1929

The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

THE IDEAL BRAHMAN

IT has been suggested that the principal purpose of the Buddha, in all that he did and taught, was the founding of an Order which should train disciples, not for abstract or general ends, but for the definite goal of Chêlaship. It may be added that every detail of his words and acts gains new light from the recognition of this primary aim.

It has also been said that the Buddha made a great and deeply considered effort to influence the Brahmans of his day, for several different yet harmonious reasons. First, in consonance with the principal purpose noted above, he clearly recognized that the Brahmans as a class offered exceptionally promising material for Chêlaship. They were endowed with spiritual gifts of great value; they had a long spiritual heredity; many of them were blest with ardent aspiration and a burning desire for spiritual attainment, as the result of that spiritual heredity. To repeat a phrase that has been used before: the Brahmans as a class represented an immense spiritual investment; the Buddha ardently desired to aid this great investment to bear fruit, and to bear fruit abundantly.

This is the brighter side of the picture, and it is still, to a certain degree, a true account of the Brahmans. But there was also the darker side. The Buddha, seeing and knowing the universe face to face, clearly perceived certain long-standing dangers in the position of the Brahmans of his day; the danger of spiritual and temporal ambition; the danger that the Brahmans as a class, instead of giving spiritual and intellectual life to their land, might become a tyrannous despotism, entrenching themselves, not only through superior intellectual vigour, but by all the arts of superstition and priestcraft; so that, in spite of the genuinely spiritual minority among them, they might, as a class, become a burden and a menace to India, a source of darkness rather than light.

Seeing these menacing possibilities, the Buddha made a strong effort, sustained through a long series of years, to call the Brahmans back to the high ideals which were in their spiritual heredity, and which had been reinforced when the King Initiates of the Rajput race had accepted Brahmans as their disciples, as recorded in the great Upanishads; a strong and sustained effort at the same time to draw them back from the dangerous path, which, as a class, they were already entering. Unhappily, it must be added that, on the whole, this splendid and generous effort failed. Many spiritually gifted Brahmans were drawn to the Buddha, and therefore to the Lodge, by the splendour of his character and his teaching, as Brahmans have been drawn to the Lodge through the intervening centuries. But the Brahmans as a class went headlong forward on the dangerous path which the Buddha so clearly saw opening before them. They drove his teachings and his Order from India, and they have in fact become the most astute and oppressive priestcraft in the world.

So much in introduction to one of the Suttas, which shows, first, the way in which the Buddha made his potent effort to draw the Brahmans back again to their ancient ideals of a spiritual life; then, the high qualities, gifts and endowments of certain Brahmans, which so fully justified this effort; and, finally, the forces of reaction and obscurantism which were working in opposition to the Buddha's effort, and which, so far as the whole Brahman caste is concerned, finally gained complete mastery over spiritual aspiration.

The Sutta, like so many of the Suttas, tells a story, and tells it well. And the story is suffused with that fine ironical humour which is characteristic of so many of these records of the Buddha's teachings. The dramatic elements in the tale are brought out with finesse and skill, and with a delicate appreciation of their ironical colouring.

The Sutta follows a conventional form, and contains many repetitions, and much that is found in other Suttas. Rightly to estimate these qualities of iteration and convention, we should keep in mind that while we think of a volume of Suttas as a book to be read, the Suttas were originally stories to be told, and to be told to separate audiences, each of which might hear one story and only one. Therefore it was imperative that this story should be told in such a way that it would easily be remembered; hence the repetitions of parts of other Suttas, and the iterations within the Sutta itself. Further, each Sutta, each story designed thus to be told, must carry the pure essence of the Buddha's teachings, so that it might supply spiritual sustenance to those who might hear no second Sutta. Indeed it is an explicit condition of the collection of Twelve Suttas on which we are drawing, that each one of them should contain the Buddha's teaching and should contain it in identical terms; therefore, while the stories differ, and their differences are exceedingly informative, telling us a great deal regarding the Buddha, his methods and his message, yet the essence of all the stories is the same; each one would serve for the instruction of a disciple, and would set his feet firmly on the path of life.

The Sutta with which we are at present concerned bears the name of the

GARRETT BIBLICAL INSTITUTE LIBRARY, EVANSTON, ILL.

Brahman Sonadanda, that is "Golden-staff" or "Golden Sceptre", a name which is in itself an outline of his character. But we are given much more than an outline; the personality of Sonadanda is so fully depicted that we see both his strength and his weakness as a representative Brahman; the strength which justified the Buddha's effort, and the weakness which, growing and increasing in the Brahmans as a caste, was fated to defeat the Buddha's effort, and to bring that effort to frustration.

The Master, we are told, was journeying through the Anga country, accompanied by five hundred disciples, and had settled for a time at Champa, on the bank of Gaggara lake, a body of artificial water which had been excavated through the piety of Queen Gaggara as a halting place for Pilgrims. By the lake there was a grove of the heavily scented Champaka trees, from whose white flowers, like glove-fingers, is extracted the perfume known by the Malay name, Ylang Ylang. Beneath these trees the pilgrims rested.

Now it happened that the Brahman, Sonadanda, of the Golden-staff, dwelt not far from Queen Gaggara's lake; indeed, King Seniya Bimbisara, the ruler of Magadha, had made a grant to the Brahman, Sonadanda, of much fertile land, arable land, pasture and woodland, with many villages. So, quite unobtrusively and without comment, the narrator touches on the first danger which overshadowed the Brahmans; their willingness to lay up treasure upon earth, rather than treasure in heaven, and their persuasive way with kings and princes, who had it in their power to make rich gifts of land.

The coming of the Buddha was at once noised abroad. The Brahmans and the householders of Champa began to speak to each other concerning the coming of the Buddha to Gaggara lake, saying that he was reputed to be an Arhat, fully awakened and illuminated, richly endowed with holiness and wisdom, blessed, unequalled as a guide to the sons of men willing to be taught, an instructor of gods and men, a Master, a Buddha; that he of himself had seen and known the universe face to face, the bright worlds above, the dark worlds below, the world of men with its ascetics and Brahmans; and that he was ready to impart his wisdom to others, making known to them the truth, lovely in its beginning, lovely in its development, lovely in its perfection, making known the higher life. Finally, they told each other that it was an excellent thing to go to see such a Master.

So they began to gather together in groups and bands, making ready to set forth to where the Buddha was, at Gaggara lake.

The stir and noise of their going came to the ears of Sonadanda, as he rested on the upper terrace of his house, and, when he asked its meaning, the steward of his household told him that all the Brahmans were on their way to visit the ascetic Gotama, for so the Buddha was called by those who were not his disciples. The narrator of the story said that the number of the Brahmans at Champa, who were thus so strongly drawn toward the Buddha, whether by genuine aspiration or by curiosity, was about five hundred.

When the steward described their errand to Sonadanda, he at once made up his mind that he also would visit the Buddha, and sent word to the Brahmans

187552 BINDING APR 4 1931

asking them to wait, as he also intended to visit the ascetic Gotama in their company.

Then comes exactly the same discussion as in the story of the Brahman Kutadanta; the Brahmans try to persuade Sonadanda that it is not consonant with his dignity to pay the first visit to the ascetic, Gotama, the more so, that the ascetic Gotama is a much younger man. But Sonadanda holds firmly to his purpose, declaring that the ascetic, Gotama, is his equal in all points of family and personal distinction, while as a Buddha, fully enlightened, he is unquestionably superior. So, both through his desire to see the Buddha, and through the element of humility which made him willing and eager to admit his own inferiority, the nobler elements in Sonadanda's character are suggested by the narrator; just as his distinguished position, both spiritual and worldly, is suggested by the insistence of the Brahmans that the ascetic Gotama should pay the first visit to Sonadanda, even while they themselves, though by no means without pride in their dignity as Brahmans, were ready to pay the first visit to the ascetic Gotama.

After the narrator has thus impressed upon his hearers both the eminent dignity of the Brahman Sonadanda, and the finer qualities of aspiration and humility in his character, he proceeds to reveal certain weaknesses in Sonadanda, characteristic of the Brahmans as a class, and he does this with the artless artfulness which runs through all these stories.

Sonadanda indeed carried his point, and set forth in the company of the admiring Brahmans, stoutly asserting that the greatness of the ascetic Gotama was such that, if he were two hundred miles away, he, Sonadanda, would set forth to visit him with pilgrim's scrip and staff.

Yet, while so affirming, and drawing near to Gaggara lake, where the Buddha was encamped with his disciples, Sonadanda was full of doubts and hesitations, whose motive was sheer vanity.

He wished to seek wisdom from the Buddha, to ask him questions; but his vanity instantly suggested to him how unpleasant it would be, should the ascetic Gotama say, "You should not have asked your question in that way; you should have asked it in this way!" Sonadanda immediately conjured up a picture of his Brahman admirers, and perhaps also the disciples of the ascetic Gotama, mocking him and saying that he, Sonadanda the Brahman, did not even know how to ask a question properly. Then again, supposing that the ascetic Gotama were to ask a question, and Sonadanda should try to answer it, the ascetic Gotama might say, "The question should not be answered in that way, in this way should it be explained!" And once again the lively vanity of Sonadanda called up a picture of his Brahman friends rejoicing in his discomfiture. The Buddhist narrator skilfully and dramatically shows that the Brahman Sonadanda, even while on his way to seek wisdom from one whom he held to be a great Master, was in reality more concerned about himself than about the Master. It is a fine piece of portraiture, and it applies to others beside the ancient and venerable Brahman Sonadanda.

So overwrought by these imaginings of vanity was Sonadanda, that he

even thought of turning back to his comfortable home without visiting the Buddha. He decided that this course would be inexpedient, but his decision was prompted not by aspiration, but once more by vanity. For he pictured his companions as saying, "Sonadanda the Brahman is a fool, obstinate, proud; he is afraid to meet the ascetic Gotama; after going so far, he turns back!" And Sonadanda added in his mind, that, if they spoke thus openly of him, his fame would suffer, and, if his fame suffered, his earnings would decrease. On the whole, the heart of the Brahman Sonadanda is sufficiently revealed.

So he went forward with his companions to the grove of Champaka trees by the lake, where the Buddha was surrounded by his disciples. He greeted the Master courteously and sat down beside him, but his thoughts continued to revolve around himself: "If only the ascetic Gotama would ask me something about my own subject, the science of the Three Vedas! then I should be able to win his admiration by my answer!"

The narrator says that the Buddha clearly saw this thought in Sonadanda's mind and, with courteous kindness, proceeded to comply with Sonadanda's wish. So he said to Sonadanda:

"O Brahman, what are the qualities which, in the view of the Brahmans, a man should possess in order to be a Brahman, so that he might truthfully say 'I am a Brahman'?"

Sonadanda was immensely relieved: "Exactly what I desired has happened", he congratulated himself; "the ascetic Gotama has asked me a question in my own subject! I hope my answer will win his admiration!"

So he drew himself up, and, looking around on the gathering of Brahmans and disciples, spoke thus to the Buddha:

"In the view of the Brahmans, Gotama, in order to be a Brahman, so that he may truthfully say, 'I am a Brahman', a man should possess five endowments. And what are these five endowments?

"First, Sire, a Brahman should be well born on the mother's side and on the father's side, of stainless descent through seven generations.

"Second, he should know by heart, and be able rightly to intone the Mantras of the three Vedas; he should be a Master of Vedic studies and the traditions also; he should be able to recognize the bodily marks of a great man.

"Third, he should be handsome, fair, good to look upon.

"Fourth, he should be perfected in virtue.

"Fifth, he should be wise and learned, able to perform the Vedic sacrifice of the holy fire."

As a basis of criticism, it would be well to compare this list of qualities with the qualifications for Chêlaship, as set forth, for example, in the *Crest Jewel of Wisdom.*

The Buddha had, without doubt, a similar standard in mind, but he expressed his criticism by indirection, leading Sonadanda on by what the Latin poet calls the expedient of the diminishing heap.

So he said to Sonadanda: "But of these five qualifications, O Brahman,

would it be possible to omit one, and yet describe such a man truthfully as a Brahman?"

"Yes, Gotama", Sonadanda answered; "fairness of face could be omitted. If such a man possessed the other four, namely, birth, Vedic studies, virtue and wisdom, he could truthfully be called a Brahman."

"But of these four, would it be possible to omit one, and yet truthfully to call the man a Brahman?"

"Yes, Gotama, Vedic studies might be omitted. If such a man possessed the other three, namely, birth, virtue and wisdom, he could truthfully be called a Brahman."

"But of these three would it be possible to omit one, and truthfully to call the man a Brahman?"

"Yes, Gotama, birth could be omitted. If such a man possessed virtue and wisdom, he could truthfully be called a Brahman."

It is evident that the good Sonadanda, led on by the Buddha's skilful questioning, and preoccupied by the desire to give an answer that would win the Buddha's admiration, was going much farther than orthodox Brahmans would be willing to follow him.

They might be willing to waive good looks and even Vedic studies, since a Brahman boy might not yet have begun his studies, while not all Brahmans attained to eminent knowledge of the Vedic texts. But for a caste which was already entrenching itself in hereditary privilege, and claiming to be sacrosanct by birth alone, to exclude birth as a qualification for Brahmanhood was not admissible. Therefore we are prepared for the immediate, vigorous protest which the Buddhist recorder tells us, was raised by Sonadanda's Brahman companions:

"Say not so, noble Sonadanda, say not so! He is belittling our colour, our Mantras and our birth! Sonadanda is going over to the teaching of the ascetic Gotama!"

The recorder represents the Buddha as coming down somewhat heavily upon the protesting Brahmans, bidding them keep silent unless they thought that the distinguished Sonadanda was too ignorant and inept to speak for himself. But the recorder further represents Sonadanda as bravely taking up the cudgels in his own defence, and, incidentally, pressing forward the discussion in the direction of the conclusion which the Buddha desired to reach.

Sonadanda's nephew had accompanied him, a comely youth, Angaka, by name. Pointing to him, Sonadanda said:

"Do the worthy Brahmans see our nephew Angaka?"

Sonadanda, receiving an affirmative answer, went on to characterize Angaka in a way that was somewhat too flattering to the young man's vanity, and by implication, to the vanity of Angaka's worthy uncle. Angaka, he said, was the living embodiment of the admirable qualities which had been described as characterizing the perfect Brahman. He was of spotless lineage, handsome, well versed in Vedic studies, virtuous and wise.

"But", Sonadanda went on to say, "if Angaka should be guilty of taking life,

of theft, of unchastity, lying and drunkenness, what would his birth, his comeliness, his Vedic Mantras profit him?"

It is worth noting that Sonadanda has so completely come over to the Buddha's position, that he is here citing the five moral laws of the Buddha's Order as the standard of righteousness; and he goes on to say that, if one be perfected in virtue and wisdom, he may truthfully be called a Brahman. This is really the expression of the Buddha's ideal, and of his purpose: to call the Brahmans back to the true standard of Brahmanhood, the ancient spiritual standard, according to which a true Brahman was a knower of Brahma, a knower of the Eternal. Sonadanda here becomes the spokesman of the Buddha. He, who prided himself on his Brahman heredity, and his Vedic knowledge, is represented as setting these things aside, and basing genuine Brahmanhood on the possession of holiness and wisdom. This is exactly the ideal which the Buddha was striving to awaken in the hearts of the Brahmans.

The recorder then represents the Buddha as putting to Sonadanda another question, the answer of which further reveals a complete acceptance of the Buddha's view:

"But, O Brahman, of these two things, virtue and wisdom, is it possible to omit one, and then to say that he who possesses the other may be truthfully called a Brahman?"

"Not so, Gotama", Sonadanda answered; "for wisdom is perfected by righteousness, and righteousness is perfected by wisdom. Where there is righteousness, there is wisdom; and where there is wisdom, there is righteousness also. As one hand washes the other, so wisdom and righteousness perfect each other. Therefore wisdom and righteousness are declared to be the best things in the world."

The Buddha replies, "This is indeed so, O Brahman. I also say the same. But what is righteousness? And what is wisdom?"

Sonadanda replies that he knows only in a general way, and asks the Buddha to make the matter clear in detail.

This is the opening for what has already been spoken of, the full presentation of the Buddha's teaching, which must form a part of each one of this collection of Suttas.

This presentation is vitally important, because it shows that the primary purpose of the Buddha's whole teaching was, not the foundation of a popular religion, but the formation of an Order, which should prepare and train disciples, Chêlas.

To Sonadanda, the Buddha answers that true wisdom and righteousness, the wisdom and righteousness with which he is concerned, are bound up with the appearance in the world of an Arhat, one who has conquered the truth, who is fully awakened, who has attained to blessedness, unsurpassed as a guide to the sons of men who are willing to be led, a teacher of divine beings and men, a Master, a Buddha.

By the teaching of this Master, a householder, or the son of a householder,

or a man of any class is drawn to enter the path of discipleship, to give up the world and its attractions, and to surrender himself wholly to the guidance and teaching of the Master.

But this complete self-giving to a Master, with devoted love and aspiration, is the very essence of Chêlaship, and what the Buddha goes on to say in his reply, clearly shows that he is concerned, not with the tenets of a popular religion, but precisely with Chêlaship. For he speaks next of the practical element of Chêlaship, namely, of purification. The man who has completely surrendered himself to a Master, being admitted to that Master's Order, lives self-ruled, delighting in righteousness, and seeing danger in the least offence. He follows complete purity, in conduct and in livelihood, guarding well the door of the senses. He lays aside all weapons of offence and defence, and is filled with compassion and kindness toward everything that has life.

He submits himself to systematic discipline, under the guidance of his Master, as regards both his conduct and his meditation; the training, that is, of will and intelligence alike. The attainment of mastery over the senses is set forth in detail, a training in virtue of which each one of the senses ceases to be a means of alluring and ensnaring his mind, and becomes what it ought to be, a doorway of intelligence.

In going forth or in returning, the disciple keeps clearly before the eye of his mind, the immediate objective of each act, its spiritual significance, whether or not it is favourable to the high aim which is set before him, and the inner essence hidden within the outward appearance of the act. Thus, in looking forward, in looking about, in extending his arm or drawing it back, in eating or drinking, in standing or sitting, in sleeping or waking, he keeps himself fully aware of all that it really means. Thus is the disciple recollected and self-ruled. He seeks no more than food and raiment; having these, he is content. Whithersoever he goes, he takes these with him, as a winged bird, whithersoever it may fly, carries its wings.

"Putting away all the desires of worldliness, he dwells with heart and mind purified of lusts and longings. Putting away the corruption of the wish to injure, he dwells with heart free from anger and malice. Putting away all slothfulness of heart and mind, he dwells illumined, recollected, self-mastered. Putting away confusion of mind and perturbation, he dwells serene, free from all vexation of spirit. Putting away perplexity and doubt, he dwells in certainty of intelligence."

In each point, therefore, there are the ideals, not of the conventional adherent of religion, the conventionally religious man, though it would be well if every adherent of religion fully followed them out; these are the working ideals, the items of discipline, of the disciple, of the Chêla.

The Buddha then goes on with keenly practical eloquence to say that the disciple who thus establishes himself through wise discipline is as one who, having been plunged in debt, works his way up to solvency and a competence; as one who, having been beset by sickness and disease, completely regains his health and strength; as one who, having been a slave, subjected to the will of

another, attains the happiness of freedom; as one who, after long wandering in the desert, comes safely to his home,—so the disciple, established in discipline, is full of serenity and joy.

The Buddha then describes the attainment, by this well-trained disciple, of the successive stages of Dhyana, of illumination and power, which are the successive degrees of Chêlaship.

It is significant that, for these stages of discipleship, the Buddha uses illustrative symbols, with which we are all familiar in another context, though they are there rarely interpreted in terms of discipleship. In the first stage, the disciple is "washed and made clean." In the second stage, there is within him "a well of water, springing up to everlasting life." In the third stage his heart and soul have the serene beauty of "the lilies of the field." In the fourth stage, he is "clothed in white raiment", for he is worthy.

Then is expounded the more concrete side of discipleship. The disciple "applies his heart and mind to the formation, within this body, of another body, having form, of the substance of mind, possessed of all the organs of perception and of action." He draws it forth, in the words of *Katha Upanishad*, which the Buddha quotes, as the reed is drawn forth from its sheath; or as the serpent, sloughing off his old skin, comes forth renewed; as a sword is drawn from its scabbard.

Thus renewed and reborn, the disciple enters the path of Iddhi: "being one, he becomes many; he becomes visible or invisible, he passes through a mountain as though passing through the air; he walks on water, as on solid ground; he travels through the sky like a bird on the wing; he reaches up to the realm of Brahma; with heart serene, purified, illumined, he hears with heavenly ear, surpassing the hearing of mortals, sounds both human and celestial, far or near; with heart serene, purified, illumined, he discerns the hearts of other men, beholding their thoughts as one beholds his face in a mirror; with heart serene, purified, illumined, he attains to knowledge of his former births, and understands clearly the rebirths of others; his vision is as lucent as that of one who, standing beside a limpid mountain pool, discerns the shells and pebbles on the bottom, the fish passing through the water."

It should hardly be necessary to insist that the whole substance of this, the most characteristic and oftenest repeated discourse of the Buddha, embodied in every one of these Suttas, is concerned, not with conventional and formal religion, nor with canons of general morality, but with something far more definite and concrete, namely, with discipleship, with Chêlaship, with the spiritual pathway to the attainment of the Adept, the Master.

We return now to Sonadanda, the Brahman, to whom, in answer to his question concerning the true character of wisdom and righteousness, this eloquent teaching is addressed. How did this appeal, embodying the ancient Wisdom of the Upanishads, affect the worthy Sonadanda?

The answer is of immense historical significance, in that it symbolizes the result of the Buddha's effort to reform, purify and spiritualize the whole body of the Brahmans; it is an answer at once tragic and full of the keenest irony,

revealing the seeming success and, at the same time, the practical failure of the Buddha's magnificent appeal, and the underlying cause of that failure.

Sonadanda expressed himself as delighted, won over, fully persuaded; in the words of the sacramental formula, he went for refuge to the Buddha, the law of righteousness, the Order; he claimed the Buddha as his spiritual guide, from that day forth to his life's end. And, in token of his conversion, he invited the Buddha and his disciples to visit him and partake of his hospitality.

It is in the speech of Sonadanda accompanying this invitation and banquet, that the full irony of the story comes out. Taking a low seat beside the Buddha, Sonadanda said:

"If, Gotama, after I have entered the company, I should rise from my seat and bow down before the noble Gotama, the company would think ill of me. Now, when the company finds fault with a man, his reputation is clouded; when his reputation is clouded, his income falls off. Therefore, if I stretch forth my joined palms in salutation, let the noble Gotama accept this as though I had risen from my seat. So, also, if when I am in my chariot, I were to leave the chariot, to salute the worthy Gotama, those who were present would think ill of me. Therefore, if, when I am in my chariot, I lower my goad in salutation, let the noble Gotama accept this as though I had dismounted. For, if men thought ill of me, my reputation would be clouded; if my reputation were clouded, my income would fall off. . . ."

A man's own conscience is his sole tribunal, and he should care no more for that phantom, "opinion," than he should fear meeting a ghost if he crossed the churchyard at dark.—BULWER-LYTTON.

FRAGMENTS

I HEARD a Voice which said: March with thy time; for thou wouldst serve. How canst thou serve, living apart, unlike? The friend beside us is the friend who aids, not he far distant.

These words I considered, drawn to service.

There came another Voice: March not with thy time, it said, but with Eternity. Let time keep step with thee. Marching, dost thou call it, when a whirlwind stoops and sweeps thee up into the changing, scurrying clouds of darkness and illusion?

Service, dost thou call it,—a particle of dust to swirl with other particles, unknowing where or how, powerless to adjust or turn, together one instant, separate the next? Who spoke to thee? Not Life or thy own Soul!

I waited, knowing there was more to come,—for Truth was speaking, not the surface folly of the mind, tinkling its shallow bells.

Rather turn backward upon thyself, the Voice went on. There thou shalt find the small old path. Along that path the passion flowers bloom, and thorns are tangled that may wound thy feet. Nevertheless the Great Ones tread it too, in joy and thankfulness; and angels drift across its tender skies like banks of fleecy cloud. There thou shalt learn what Life is and what Time,—this time and all others. There thou shalt learn what Service is, and how to serve thy brothers, great and small,—master of those who are slaves, to free and save them; slave of Masters, to adore, and work their works for ever.

CAVÉ.

THEOSOPHY[1]

THE subject of this lecture is Theosophy. One sometimes fancies that members of the audience who have come to these lectures two or three years in succession, may perhaps ask themselves why the subject is always the same, always Theosophy. One answer to this possible question is that Theosophy, fully understood, includes everything; therefore, if one were to talk to the end of the cycle, much would still be left unsaid, of the great total of Theosophy.

Something is generally said, at these yearly lectures, regarding the relation of The Theosophical Society to Theosophy. That relation is simple, yet something about it may profitably be repeated. The Theosophical Society has three declared objects, three avowed purposes to fulfil. The first is to form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity without distinction of race, creed, caste, colour or sex. The second is to study religions, philosophies, sciences and ethics. The third is to investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the spiritual powers latent in man.

It has often been said on theosophical platforms that The Theosophical Society has no doctrines; that, except for these three very general, almost abstract objects, The Theosophical Society has no definite teaching to put forward. This is true, yet it falls short of being the whole truth, for The Theosophical Society, besides having its three declared objects, also possesses a seal and a motto, and the seal and motto contain a profound philosophy of life and of the universe. While the seal appears without any explanation of its meaning in the Constitution of the Society, and while the original of the motto is in Sanskrit, and is therefore not very revealing, nevertheless the two taken together suggest a marvellous solution of the problems of cosmic life, spiritual life and human life.

It is true that, since the symbols of the seal are universal, they may be interpreted in many ways; it is further true that The Theosophical Society does not require a definite interpretation of these universal symbols, nor demand explicit adherence to them, so that one may become a member in good standing, if one affirm one's sympathy with the first object, regardless of any other principles or teachings. Yet the seal and the motto are there. In English, the motto reads: There is no religion higher than Truth. The Sanskrit original has a deeper and more universal meaning: namely, that there is no law, no obligation, no character which transcends what is based upon the Real. And in Sanskrit the Real has a definite meaning: a consciousness which is infinite, eternal and omniscient. Therefore the motto of The Theosophical Society affirms that there is no obligation, no law, no character which tran-

[1] From stenographic notes of a lecture by Charles Johnston, on April 28, 1929, on the occasion of the Convention of The Theosophical Society.

scends that which is based upon this universal, eternal consciousness. So that we already have in the motto a complete philosophy, a deeply spiritual Oversoul for our Society. If we try to work out in detail the meaning of that infinite spiritual consciousness, we shall come to see how rich in significance our motto is.

The seal is equally full of meaning. Many who have visited the Studio in Washington Mews may remember that the seal and motto are displayed upon a shield, above a bust of W. Q. Judge. The seal consists, first, of a serpent forming a circle, with the tail of the serpent entering its mouth: the circle of eternity, not an unbroken eternity, but an eternity of revolving cycles. Some of us who are students of modern mathematics have been greatly interested to find that mathematicians have discovered the theosophical serpent. Einstein's space re-enters itself, just as the serpent in the seal of The Theosophical Society re-enters itself: if you go infinitely far, according to his view, you come back to the starting point. In his very intuitive book on Einstein, Steinmetz says that, if we were endowed with infinite vision, we should see in every direction an image of the backs of our own heads. This is exactly the same principle as is conveyed in the serpent of our seal. Mathematicians have discovered that the re-entrant cycle is a fundamental law of the Universe, a law which was well known ages ago in the countries of the Orient, and is fully discussed, for example, in the *Purânas* and in the Buddhist *Suttas*.

The great cycle implies many lesser cycles. It is again both interesting and significant that some of these lesser cycles are being noted and described. To take one, that is frequently mentioned in the newspapers: the cycle of sun spots, the recurring periods of the dark spots which one can sometimes see even with the naked eye, if the sun be near the horizon and sufficiently veiled by mist. These spots on the sun pass through cycles of greatest and least extent in a period of eleven years and a month or two; and they so change the aura, the electrical field of the solar system, that our terrestrial weather is strongly influenced by them. And it is suggested that many events of organic life also follow the cycle of the sun spots. Again, Petrie has written much that is valuable regarding cycles in art and science, with special reference to ancient Egypt.

Thus the law of cycles is appearing in contemporary thought. All these cycles are interesting, but for us the most insistent and important is the cycle of birth, death and rebirth, and, while The Theosophical Society does not proclaim the doctrine of reincarnation, nor require from its members adherence to that doctrine, yet the seal of the Society announces it. For the great recurring cycle implies and contains all lesser recurring cycles; the alternation of birth, death and rebirth is implied, not only for the individual man and woman, but for the races of men, and for planets and solar systems.

Within the circle of the seal there are two triangles, one of fire colour, with its apex pointing upward. The upward pointing triangle is a symbol, a confession of faith, for it represents the threefold spirit, the triune holy fire, which

has its expression in the western world in the doctrine of the Trinity. The threefold symbol has many meanings: the beginning of manifestation, the middle and end of manifestation, followed by a new beginning; the conscious thinker, thinking, and what is thought; or the divine light, the divine mind and the divine idea; or the creator, the preserver and the destroyer, who is also the transformer, destroying only to make anew. This doctrine of the Trinity, of one Being with three Persons or Aspects, is far more ancient than Christianity; it is set forth in the *Mahabharata* almost in the same terms as in the Athanasian creed.

Interlocked in the seal with this triangle of fire colour is another triangle, pointing downward and coloured blue, the water colour, representing threefold manifested space. Again, the three sides are symbolic, representing substance, force, and the dark space in which substance is manifested through force. Perhaps it would be a true criticism of much of our western science to say that it has grasped the principle of the inverted triangle, and has in large measure lost sight of the triangle with the apex upward; that is, it has discovered matter, force and space, and has lost sight of spirit. One of the messages of Theosophy to modern science is that without the two triangles you cannot have a universe. The manifested worlds are impossible without the spirit which is manifested in them. Objects of consciousness are inconceivable without a consciousness to which they are objective. Modern science, if it is to be true science, to have a true philosophical life, will have to re-discover the upward-pointing triangle of spirit.

There are other symbols in the seal: in the centre is the *crux ansata*, the key of Isis, the golden key of immortal life; and, where the head and tail of the serpent come together, there is the swastika, the symbol of perpetually revolving force. This force is present in the circling of planetary systems and in the revolving electrons of the atom. So we have here yet another point common to the concepts of modern science and the implicit philosophy of the seal, which one may call the Oversoul of The Theosophical Society.

These large concepts of recurring cycles and revolving forces are abstract; but students of Theosophy are not limited to abstractions. They are also devoted to thoughts, actions and principles which are altogether concrete. And, if we interpret these great symbols in concrete terms, we shall see that they imply not only the re-entrant cycle of human life, but the gradual rising of human life toward divine life, out of the realm of the water forces into the realm of spiritual fire, out of the shadow into the shine. This spiritual ascent is not an abstraction, for it is made concrete in the development of immortal men, just men made perfect, having, as a part of their perfection, power and holiness and immortality. Their habitation is that house not made with hands, to which the key of Isis gives admittance. The eternal toil of these immortals for mankind is once more symbolized by the perpetual circling of the swastika. For this is a universe of perpetual motion, of perpetual effort, and the only rest which is lawful and wise is rest in motion.

The first object of The Theosophical Society is to form the nucleus of a

universal brotherhood of humanity. What will that nucleus be? It can consist only of the assemblage of the immortals among mankind. It cannot be a true nucleus unless it be an eternal nucleus. It cannot be a nucleus of humanity unless it be divine humanity, which is the life that sustains humanity. Therefore, our first object, to which all members of the Society give their adherence, while it does not of necessity imply that all members believe in Masters of Wisdom, nevertheless does imply, when it is philosophically understood, the existence of Masters of Wisdom, of just men made perfect, of humanity spiritualized, fully evolved, immortal.

The second object carries a similar implication. If we study the wise records of the Orient, which are included in the second object, we find that, through many variations of place and time, one principle is always present, namely, the teaching of divine humanity, of humanity with the potentiality of divinity. Every religion which is worthy of the name is a practical manual or guide, revealing the way to immortality. If it be not this, then it is not genuinely a religion. If the adherents of any religion have lost sight of the truth that their religion is a practical guide to immortality, then they are no longer true to their founders and their spiritual principles. Thus we have an accurate measure for the professors of religion to-day: If they realize that their religion is a practical teaching of immortality, and if they carry out this teaching in practice, then they are true adherents of that religion. If not, they have yet to learn, through Theosophy, what their religion really is.

The third object, which is concerned with unexplained laws of nature and the spiritual powers latent in man, has the same significance. For the one essential spiritual power latent in man, of which all other spiritual powers are manifestations, is the power of immortality. Effective study of that power can be pursued in one way only, namely, by stepping firmly on the path of immortal life and going courageously forward. If we do this, we shall no longer theorize; we shall know through our own experience the quality of immortal consciousness; and we shall see that all the greatest men in history, the sages, the philosophers, the founders of religions, were great and are great because they discerned that essential truth, and, having discerned it, carried it into action and conquered immortality.

Let us take a few of the great names of western history and see if this be true. Let us begin with Pythagoras, who is recognized as the first milestone of occidental philosophical thinking. So essentially was Pythagoras the initiator of occidental thought, that it was he who formulated the name of philosophy. Philosophia does not mean, as we may think, the love of wisdom; it means something richer and deeper: the wisdom of love. The two are united in a single word, because they must be united. For love without wisdom is tragedy; wisdom without love, if such a thing could be, would be sterility. Therefore the wisdom of love is a profounder thought than the love of wisdom. Pythagoras, who framed the word philosophy, distinctly taught immortal life as a goal to be realized. He laid down, for the attainment of that life, a system of ethics, containing much that is ascetic in the true

sense. "Ascetic" primarily means training, discipline, rather than abstinence; though any true discipline will involve much abstinence: abstinence not only from those things which are in themselves hurtful, but from all things that waste spiritual energy. If we are to set forth on the quest of immortality, we should realize from the beginning that this task will call on all the powers that we possess, wisely trained and husbanded, and much more, that we do not yet possess, but have still to gain. Therefore every wise system of discipline is ascetic in this double sense. It teaches us to develop and exercise our powers, to do certain right things in the right way; and also to abstain from other things. John Stuart Mill defined capital as the fruit of two things: effort and abstinence. He who would lay up treasure upon earth must make efforts and must abstain. He who would lay up treasure in heaven must make efforts even more heroic, and must be unceasing in abstinence from all things that waste divine energy. He will need all the resources he possesses, and more, before he reaches the goal of his journey.

Pythagoras taught wisdom, with immortality as the goal. Plato, who owes so much to Pythagoras, and to the sources from which Pythagoras drew his knowledge, teaches the same wisdom with the same goal; Plato, who has for centuries inspired the more spiritual thought of the western world. Emerson said that there are only ten men living at any time who really understand Plato, and that for them the works of Plato are reprinted. Really to sound the depths of Plato, requires a lifetime of devotion. Both Plato and Pythagoras looked backward as well as forward. Like Solon, like Pythagoras, like Thales and other wise men of Greece, Plato owed his wisdom to the Lodge of Masters, which was the secret splendour of Egypt. All of these wise men avowed it and even boasted of it. In modern Europe and America it has been found convenient to forget this, so that our histories of philosophy and science begin with Greece, with Pythagoras and Plato. Once more we forget the saying of the wise priest of Isis to Solon: "You Greeks are children; you have forgotten the past!"

Let us consider the great personality of Christ, standing for so much in the West. His adherents and those who bear his name often genuinely love and revere him, with a true echo of his charity in their hearts; how many of them realize that his teaching and purpose is practical instruction in immortality? Yet this is exactly the significance of his saying: "Strait is the gate and narrow the way that leadeth unto life and few there be that find it." He came to bring life, and life more abounding. That more abundant life is the beginning of everlasting life. It is part of the profound tragedy of the world that that great Master is so persistently thwarted and misunderstood. One finds popular books to-day which speak of him as a well-meaning but deluded reformer, or even as a spiritual adventurer who broke down because of ambition, or, among the more hopeful and better works, as a great poet. Yes, he is a great poet. Every one of his parables is a poem. The parable of the Pharisee and the Publican is a perfect piece of drama, expressing character in speech. Two types of humanity are depicted, each of them through a speech of a few words.

This is consummate art, to take two contrasted types which are enduring and universal, and to crystallize each of them dramatically, in a single sentence. There is no more perfect poem than the parable of the Prodigal Son. Christ constantly uses even the forms of Hebrew poetry, as when he says: "Consider the lilies how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these": even in translation, a perfect poem. The truer translation is, "they spin not, neither do they weave", the natural order of the two textile processes,—Jesus observing more accurately than his translators represent. And again following what is probably the more accurate translation: "Give not jewels unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." This has the balance of clauses, which is one of the characteristics of Hebrew poetry, as in the great prophetic sentence which is somewhat obscured in our versions, "A voice crying: In the wilderness prepare ye a way for the Lord, in the desert make straight a highway for our God."

No one has yet written, and no one except a student of Theosophy can write, the book that should be written: Christ, the Master of spiritual science, the profound teacher of applied wisdom. Let us illustrate this by a comparison. If you study a picture by Leonardo da Vinci, you can tell at once that he was a master of anatomical knowledge; or consider a statue like the Apollo Belvedere: clearly the man who shaped it was a superb anatomist, besides being a great sculptor. The same thing is manifest in the poems, the parables, of Christ. Everyone who has studied spiritual science, even in a humble and limited way, will say that every one of the parables is true to the anatomy of spiritual science. Just as in the Apollo Belvedere, the form is art, the structure is science. Yet we still lack, and our modern age greatly needs, a book on the spiritual science of Christ, a searching study of Christ as a Master of spiritual science, the science of immortality;—not of immortality in the abstract, but of immortal, divine life, concrete and real beyond our present concept of reality. For our present realities are shadows; the realities of Masters are eternal, and they themselves are eternal realities.

To speak of Masters of Wisdom, as their existence is taught in the Oriental scriptures, would not be difficult. But let us take for granted that most of us already know something of the records of the Eastern teaching, and are, therefore, able to recognize that the Buddha, or Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gîta*, or Shankaracharya, are teaching a certain definite thing: the path of immortality, and the conditions of that path; the laws, the rules, the discipline of immortal life, and once more not an abstract immortality, but immortal life as concrete, and as realized by divine, immortal men.

Let us approach the subject from another side. Many of us, who are students of Theosophy, are convinced that those great men, such as Pythagoras, Christ, the Buddha, who have taught the way of immortality, were able to teach it because they had trodden that way themselves, and had attained to immortality. And this must mean, not only that they were, but that they are immortal,—at this moment, in the world, presently immortal.

This brings us to the heart of the matter. Consider what it would mean if, instead of bewildered peoples, sheep gone astray without a shepherd, the sheep would seek and find their shepherds, and would allow the shepherds to lead them once more; and this is as true of the world of religion as of the world of politics. If we seriously survey the life of our times, we shall come to recognize that in many ways it is tragic, and perhaps most tragic, because we are losing the sense of our tragedy. Human life tends to be thin, monotonous, sinking to a dead level of vulgarity which does not recognize itself as vulgar, yet which is essentially vulgar, because it does not take into account or make provision for any high spiritual consciousness in any department of its activities. The penalty cannot be escaped; if we turn away from the summits of spiritual life, we enter the dead desert of vulgarity. There are tragedies in life—sorrow and death are tragedies—but, in our modern self-assurance and materialism, we are losing the sense of their tragedy, losing the realization of the dignity of sorrow, our sense of the dignity of suffering courageously borne. We should do well to ask ourselves whether we may not be in danger of forfeiting altogether the dignity of human life. Whether as individuals or as nations, we no longer know whither we are going, in this world or in the next, and we no longer greatly care. We are drifting we know not whither, and we are hardly concerned to know. It is a form of spiritual and mental anarchy, that should evoke the intervention of the divine powers. Perhaps it has in fact evoked that intervention.

Holding in view the cheap and shallow lives of nations and of individuals, let us then consider what it would mean for these unshepherded sheep if they would seek, and, earnestly seeking, find the immortal men who are ever within reach; if nations and men could make up for centuries of blindness and folly by an hour of golden wisdom, and, by a supreme act of faith, could compel the Masters of Wisdom once more to lead them. What would it not mean for nations, and for us, as individuals?

Once more let us approach the matter from another side. We are told that modern science and art add to the beauty of life. Perhaps in a certain sense they do this. But must it not be said that our science too often leads to practical materialism; that much of our art is ignoble, because it no longer seeks to reveal spiritual and immortal consciousness? Take the great art of the Middle Ages, with its cathedrals, its pictures which record a divine sacrifice, and the glory of resurrection. They are noble in essence, as they are splendid in execution. Too many modern pictures are ignoble, because there is in them no revelation of a high spiritual consciousness. This is true also of our modern sciences. They no longer see life as a whole, with spiritual vision. Therefore they see falsely. There are in our modern sciences minor joys of discovery, but there is no steady light of inspiration. Therefore, as has been said, they lead to practical materialism.

Consider what it would mean if a Master of Wisdom were to take in hand one's personal life, and were to transmute it into pure gold; not in part but in all things; making it radiant with beauty, luminous with wisdom, in-

spired by a true and wise love. This is what a Master of Wisdom is able to do for those who will entrust their lives to him without reserve. Yet, like the God of tradition, a Master of life is jealous; he must have all or none. As Christ so clearly said, we must leave houses and lands and father and mother, if we would be his disciples. "Whosoever forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." Masters of wisdom demand this complete self-giving because they see that the path of life has its dangers; unless we accept their guidance without reserve, putting ourselves wholeheartedly under this wise guidance, the Masters cannot guide us effectively and safely.

Let us well consider this possibility, for it is a possibility for each one of us, and, if we have courage and purity of heart, we may make it a reality. Let us search for the tracks of the Masters of Wisdom, determined that we shall find and follow them. Let us take our lives in both hands, and put them in the hands of the Masters. When drawing near to a Master, the pupils of old in ancient India brought an offering of firewood in both hands. The meaning of this symbol was: "I bring the fuel. Kindle it with divine fire!" And the acceptance of the sincere disciple was certain. To-day, as in the days of old, the Masters of Wisdom are ready and willing, with an eagerness that we cannot realize, to take in hand our lives, to fill them with the holiness of the highest religious aspiration, the wisdom of the deepest spiritual science, and the beauty of the noblest art.

Every convinced and experienced student of Theosophy will confidently affirm that this ideal can be realized, that it is no rainbow on the horizon which vanishes as we approach, though the ideal recedes in the sense that it becomes ever greater and more inspiring. If, then, we accept this ideal of discipleship, of service of the Masters of Wisdom, if we are willing to be adopted by them, and to conform to the conditions of our adoption, this may bring to us, and in due time to all mankind, a splendour that is beyond our dreams.

It would further appear to be certain that, if in any nation a sufficient number of individuals thus wholeheartedly entrusted the guidance of their lives to the Masters, the Masters on their part would be able, gradually and almost imperceptibly, to take that nation in hand, guiding its feet into the ways of light and life.

Beginning with the seal and motto of The Theosophical Society, we can go far, for in their universal symbols they contain great spiritual truths, each one of which carries a magnificent promise. And it is the essence of theosophical science that it is an experimental science; it has nothing to do with vague generalizations or empty theories. Theosophical science rest upon the principle of trying and testing, and that only is theosophical science, which has been tried and tested and tried again. Or, to put the matter more directly: he alone is a true theosophist (a name which any of us would seriously hesitate to claim for ourselves)—he alone is a true theosophist, who has been tried and tested in the furnace of the Masters of Wisdom.

The purpose of this trial and testing is to make us fit for immortality.

Immortality is not a light gift, lightly to be won. The battle for immortal life is not a skirmish, to be fought and carried to victory in a day,—yet we have been told that to concentrate the whole war into a single day is possible, though supremely difficult. The path of immortality is war, a war against death and all the children of death; those who enlist in that warfare must have the qualities of soldiers. But this should be a challenge to every gallant heart. Surely, if we have high hopes and aspirations for the future of mankind, the gallantry of the warrior is something we would in no wise omit. For the immortal warfare, then, we must have the purity of heart of the little child, the warrior's valour, and finally undying persistence, which counts every defeat a step to victory; a determination that is invincible, and must be invincible if we are to gain the victory. The battle of immortality is not lightly won.

The worth of what has been said must be known by its fruit. The time has been profitably spent if any heart has been touched to high endeavour, if a spark has been kindled, or has come into being of itself, as a beginning of that immortal life. The Theosophical Society does not yet go out into the highways and hedges, and compel men to come in. Still, there is an open door. There is an urgent, though not a vocal invitation. If there be any wisdom or power in what has been said, the test will be this: whether any of those who have generously listened will be moved, not to emotion, but to action, valorously taking the first step on the path of immortal life; taking their lives steadily in hand, determined to learn all that can be learned, to seek those who know a little more, to seek their counsel and their help, so that the path of life may be entered with wisdom as well as with valour.

For this is the invitation of The Theosophical Society: an invitation to seek the path of immortality, so that, going forward upon that path, we may find the Masters of Wisdom and persuade them (if they need to be persuaded) to take our lives in hand and guide us in the way of life.

In the background of our hearts there may be the hope that we may later persuade them, by the persuasion of their love, to take in hand one after another of the nations of mankind, and finally the whole human race. If this hope should be fulfilled, then we foresee for mankind a splendour that mankind has never dared to dream. It is in the power of each of us to work for that great reward. The decision is in our own hands.

WAR MEMORIES

IV

"The Race To The Sea"

THE fall of Antwerp was one of the most dramatic incidents of the War. Coming when it did and as it did, it cut sharply across the hopes of a world which was awaiting the outcome of the siege in anxious suspense; a world which, despite the gathering evidence to the contrary, still clung to the hope which had been kept alive all through the terrible weeks since the first shock of Liége, that there *must* come one great and decisive Allied victory which would break the force of the German invasion and bring about the collapse of the German power. So this last gallant stand of little Belgium aroused universal sympathy and attention. In view of what actually happened, it seems to us now almost incredible that we could ever have felt so confident that Antwerp was impregnable; that the ancient conviction of its complete immunity against attack should have survived, and survived with such tenacity; that almost up to the end, although we had seen Liége crumbled into dust, and Namur shattered and desolated, Antwerp was still looked upon as proof against any and all siege guns, no matter how gigantic. The name of Brialmont still wielded its magical power. "Why, they *can't* take Antwerp," I often heard it asserted by those who were supposed to know. "It's perfectly safe. Wait and see!" So we waited—and we saw.

The taking of Antwerp was a military necessity to the Germans. When, early in August, they had "hacked their way through Belgium", and had then turned south into France for their rush on Paris, so valiant had been the Belgian resistance that, time being precious, and dangerous though it was, the Germans were obliged to leave Antwerp behind them, still proudly unconquered, and a constant menace to their lines of communication. And although every man was needed to increase the strength of the invading forces in France, a whole Army Corps had to be left to watch, and if possible to harass into submission, the small Belgian Army which, however, continued stoutly to hold its own inside the ring of forts surrounding the last of the great Belgian strongholds. As it turned out, however, it was the little Belgian Army that harassed the powerful Germans, for, at the most critical moments for the enemy, it made sortie after sortie, the chief one being while the battle of the Marne was in progress, when the Belgian attack was so determined that German troops, starting south, were held in check until the perilous days for the Allies were over. No wonder that the Germans decided, at all costs, to clear their exposed flank!

Antwerp, encircled as it was by no less than four lines of defence, each line

considered sufficient of itself to withstand most shocks, was naturally looked upon as one of the best fortified cities of Europe, and it is not surprising that when Brussels was in danger, the Government decided to remove to the great northern stronghold where, if there were to be *any* safe spot, it would probably be able to remain unmolested. This had been about the middle of August. By the first days of October, the real state of affairs was only too apparent; the situation had become desperate, the Belgians being forced to retire little by little. Even the British reinforcements could not avert the catastrophe—they had come too late. There was a worse danger, however, than the loss of Antwerp itself. This was the threatened cutting off of the only line of retreat left open to the Belgians; that narrow stretch of unconquered territory to the north and west. If the Germans were to force the passage of the Scheldt, the Belgian Army would lose its last chance of joining the Allies; its isolation would be complete. There was not a moment to lose. Great masses of the enemy, from the regions of the Marne and the Aisne, were pressing north by way of Lille toward those much coveted Channel ports. At all costs the line of the Yser must be reached before it was too late. Once there, and in touch with the British and the French forces, there was still a fighting chance of saving that scrap of Belgian territory between the Yser and the sea, that tiny remnant of the Belgian Kingdom which would also provide a strong defensive barrier for the rest of the coast line, sweeping south. It was thus that little Nieuport became the pivot on which, for the moment, the fate of nations seemed to hang.

It came about, therefore, that toward the end of the first week in October, we who were in Ghent began to see many new sights, and although some of us felt that we must long since have seen all the sights that ever could or would be seen, we had more than one new experience in store for us. We had had so many false rumours regarding the coming of the Germans, that most of us had, I think, ceased to pay much attention, and we continued our work as we could. Ghent was an open city, and we anticipated a "peaceful occupation" at the worst. The Allied troops would, of course, leave when they had to leave; the elephant-grey motors, marked with the familiar "*Service Militaire*", would vanish; the British Red Cross doctors and nurses also, and all the Allied wounded; even the brilliant and incongruous bottle-green uniforms of the Belgian *Carabiniers*, with their strange, patent leather, flat-topped hats, and the green coats, scarlet breeches and huge busbies of the *Guides*, to all of which, because of their picturesqueness, we had become so much attached, would now be seen no more,—but the Belgian civilians would stay, because it was their country, and why should not "neutrals" stay too?

Those last days, before the actual bombardment of Antwerp began, were crowded ones for me, for our small unit had many calls, and we continued to range over miles of country, sometimes along open roads, where we were in danger of making targets of ourselves for the enemy, close at hand; sometimes along less precarious, more sheltered lanes. Many heroic deeds were done at this time, some of which I heard of merely, some of which I saw. One seems

to stand out in my memory, clear cut, like a cameo, even against that vivid background of daring and of sacrifice. Perhaps this was so because it was my first sight of that particular kind of heroism. A small outpost of some fifty Belgians had been left (not far from Berlaere, I think it was), to guard the retreat of their comrades; a retreat which the enemy's overwhelming numbers had forced on them. In the ebb and flow of that battle front; on that blood-drenched ground, every inch of which was fought for, such a necessity was not uncommon. It had been the duty of this little band of men, all of them volunteers as we heard afterwards, to stand and face, unflinching, the certain death which that post offered. Most of them were of the peasant class only, and they had known but too well, as, one by one, they stepped forward out of the ranks, what their fate would be; there could be no question as to that, but they had not faltered. And there they had stood; there they had fired their last shot; there they had fallen; and there we saw them lying—dead. The beaten and crushed grass around was reddened with their blood. Every man, true to his trust, had fought till he could fight no more, and then he had died. He had given what he had, all he had. And there was a priest, black-robed and wearing a Red Cross brassard, lying dead among them. I wondered how many of the dying he had shriven before he himself had been shot down. That lonely little outpost, with its silent yet eloquent dead, made an appeal which I always associate with those last hours of mine in what was still unconquered Belgium; for that ground, which they had so gallantly defended, had later been temporarily regained (that is how we had been able to pass that way), but the little outpost had paid the great price for its recovery—even to the last man. How strange it is, as you stand looking at a scene like that, its unfading glory searching to your very depths,—suddenly a veil seems torn aside, and you recognize that here was found the *real* life, and that in that life, deeds such as this are the usual, perhaps almost the commonplace. To those simple men at that great hour of choice, there was but one simple thing to do—to offer their lives as the price of freedom for their country and their comrades. Did they hesitate? Not one. They had stepped across a threshold into a land of light, where they saw with clearer vision the glories which are hidden from our earth-dimmed eyes, and it is *we*, still groping in the shadow-land of unreality, to whom such deeds appear heroic. In that radiant land, the glad and eager giving of one's life must be the divinely natural.

So those last days, before the great city was taken, slipped away almost silently—silently, because we had long since forgotten to take time into consideration. They slipped away as sand slips noiselessly through an hour-glass—and then the end came.

No one who saw it will ever forget the evacuation of Antwerp; its appalling suddenness; the horror and madness of that flight of terror-stricken people. It was like the bursting of a dike. Up to the last moment, before the actual bombardment of the city began, the old illusion that the splendid fortifications would defy even the heaviest of the German siege artillery, remained unshaken

(at least among the inhabitants in general), and the greater part of the people of Antwerp were wholly unprepared for the sudden blow when it fell. They awakened one morning to find that the Government had left during the preceding night; that all over the walls of the houses and public buildings, notices were posted announcing the probability of almost immediate bombardment, and advising instant departure for those who had it in their power to leave. Those who could or would not, were to descend to their cellars and to stay there. There followed a veritable stampede, many not even going back into their homes to gather up a few of their most cherished belongings. They poured out of Antwerp as a river rushes and roars when a dam gives way. So completely taken by surprise were they, that only two or three avenues of escape remained; one of these being along the road through St. Nicolas and Lokeren to Ghent. That is how I chanced to see so much of it. But it was not only from Antwerp itself that they came; it was from the countryside also, —the countryside within a radius of twenty miles, for the terror had spread like wildfire. It is said that more than four hundred thousand were in flight. Along every road they came trooping, by every lane or smallest path; across the untrodden fields they swept like autumn leaves driven before a storm; and, to add to the mad confusion, drawn as if by a fatal attraction into that ghastly current of terrified fugitives, rushed many of their farm animals, cows and sheep and goats. Much of it was a repetition of what we had been seeing for days, but immensely magnified, intensified. What made it different, too, was that, as the day wore on, the thunder of the great siege guns grew louder, more terrible at every moment.

It was not only the civilian population which was surging westward, however, in that "race to the sea", for along that same road came a large part of what was left of the little Belgian Field Army—perhaps the saddest sight of all just then, after the splendid fighting. In as much order as it could maintain, with wave on wave of refugees beating upon it, it was retreating to the Yser; the Garrison Army followed the next day, I think. This was something I had never before seen—an army in retreat, and it is a very moving sight. That road from Antwerp is none too wide when, passing along it, you have columns of troops whose progress is hindered, if not blocked, by masses of fleeing refugees. There was almost inconceivable congestion and confusion, and I have often wondered how any progress could have been made at all; but the steady, dogged tramp, tramp, tramp of that little retreating army; the broken, terrified shuffle, shuffle of those thousands upon thousands of weary civilian feet, never ceased for a second—it seems to me I shall hear it always. The Belgian Army, as I remember it, kept remarkably good order; its spirit remained Belgian—one would find it hard to give higher praise than that. The men, weary and spent as they were, after their stubborn fighting against almost hopeless odds, some of them not yet wholly recovered from wounds, their heads still bandaged or arms wrapped round with gauze, kept step in a kind of defiant rhythm, shoulder to shoulder, their rifles in place, their heads held high. They were retreating, but they

were not beaten. Anyone could see that. So they passed and passed and passed. Of course I did not see it all; how could we spend our priceless hours—hours now drawing so rapidly to their end—watching even a retreating army? But we met it, or parts of it, more than once in our rapid journeys to and from our different villages and towns during the whole of that sad day, and afterwards the refugees alone remained to us. We worked feverishly to gather in as many of the fallen as we could, no longer waiting for "calls" as formerly. The fields and lanes were literally strewn with the exhausted and half dead. Our space was limited; to make a choice, when we wished to gather in all, was a grievous and heart-breaking task, knowing, as we now did, that only a few hours more of work would be vouchsafed us—and after that, the enemy!

Some distance out of Ghent, and well off the beaten track, there stands a small château in its lovely park. This park is flanked by the tiny village of E——, a handful of houses, and a little church, the centre of peaceful Flemish life. The château and park are the Belgian estates of an old French family who, for many generations, have spent their summers here in happy retirement. The present owners were two elderly ladies, the Comtesse de R—— and her slightly younger sister, and it was here that fate threw me, I might say, on their very doorstep, on a night of nights. It was at the end of a long day; we had made many trips to the outlying places, carrying our sorry freight back to Ghent, then starting off again almost at once. On this particular trip of ours, we were homeward bound when, stopping for a moment in the little village of E——, we were asked if we could make room for two refugees who were in great need of immediate medical attention, the kind of attention which the château found it impossible to furnish. This was only to be accomplished if one of the workers gave up a place in the *camionette*, and waited until it should return, probably within the space of a few hours. As I was the latest comer among them, I offered to stay, and this being agreed to, we drove to the château to collect our two new sufferers. After a general shifting about of our refugees, the two medical cases were somehow tucked in; I reluctantly parted with a small bundle, really a baby if you got it unwrapped, —a tiny refugee baby which had been for a long while sleeping quite peacefully in my arms (the only peaceful thing we had seen all day)—and off went the carload, leaving me, as an uninvited and very grimy guest, on the hands of these two charming and dignified old ladies. War, as all imminent danger, is a great opener of hearts, and it was not five minutes before I was made to feel rather more than welcome. Indeed, as I knew France fairly well, while I had known Belgium for a few days only, we found much to talk about, many ideas to exchange, information to give and receive. It was toward evening, and soon dinner was served,—a frugal enough affair, in consideration of the sorrowful times we were passing through, but served with all the quiet and repose, the attention to the smallest detail which one would expect in a household of that kind. I remember that the ancient butler, Félix, with his delightfully polished manners, his official dignity, his almost inaudible exits and

entrances, was like a creature out of a long dead past to me, who had been seeing nothing but horrors, hearing nothing but noise for so long. That whole dinner, the beautifully appointed table, the soft candle light, the dim, serene faces of my two hostesses, the peace, the aloofness, is a memory in itself. Once during the meal, Félix had come to Madame de R——'s side and had said something in a low voice, but, whatever it was, the peace remained unbroken, the serenity undisturbed. They probably saw how tired I was, for with true French courtesy, the War was not even mentioned until we rose from table, and so sharp and sudden was the contrast of this hour with the crowded hours of the days just gone, that I believe I, for the moment, had never so much as thought of the approaching Germans. Rising from dinner, Madame de R—— turned to me, however, and said, as though she were mentioning the most casual affair:

"News has just been brought me that the Germans are only a few miles distant. Shall we walk to the entrance gate of the park? I expect my messenger to bring me further news."

I took a deep breath. At last! Slowly we walked through the autumn darkness, down the beautiful, long, winding driveway—we three women who, but a few hours ago, had not even met.

"It will be best not to talk," said my hostess in a low voice, so we walked in silence until we came to the fine old gate which was the entrance to the estate, —and there we stood. I suppose it was about nine o'clock. I remember that I listened to the faint sound of the night wind in the tops of the tall poplar trees which lined the avenue, and that it was the only sound I heard. There was a kind of ominous silence, like the great and awful hush before a storm, and we stood there, every sense alert. Presently, off in the distance we heard the sound of running feet, running, running,—oh, such urgency in that sound! I confess I felt my heart thumping in my throat. I could not help it. On and on came those running feet, and then an elderly man, breathless, but perfectly steady, shot suddenly out of the darkness, and stood before us.

"They are here, Madame la Comtesse," he said rapidly, standing hat in hand. "They say they are swarming in thousands along the Ghent highroad; François, who saw them, told me. I did not wait to see if many are coming *our* way. I saw some scouts pass first—they did not see me, for I was hiding in a ditch—and after they had gone I heard the tramp of marching men and horses in the distance, and then I ran to bring the news of their coming."

"You have done well," came Madame de R——'s quiet voice, though it had a stern ring in it. "Now go back to the village as quickly as you can and tell the people. Above all, tell Monsieur le Curé. Remember what the King has asked of us who are civilians—that we shall remain quietly indoors, and beyond everything to make no demonstrations. Go across the park, not round by the road,—it is shorter and safer. Go quickly! Come!" she said, turning to us, and we walked rapidly back toward the château.

Old Félix was there waiting, and as we mounted the steps and passed

through the entrance doorway into the wide, marble-floored hall, at a sign from his mistress, he noiselessly closed the heavy panelled doors, and lowered a great iron bar across them. The shutters were already closed, and only one dim light burned overhead.

"Come!" said Madame de R—— again, and led the way into a small *salon* which overlooked the hall, and which was also but dimly lit, and there we sat down, and again we waited, in silence. I have never known how long we waited; I have never even tried to guess. We were living at such high speed that it might have been the tick of a clock, or it might have been an eternity, but suddenly, they were on us. We heard them approaching nearer and nearer; along the poplar avenue they came, and across the flagged court, where horses' hoofs rang sharply, and where guttural voices began to break the stillness of the night. Then Madame de R—— rose, and making a motion to us to stay where we were, she walked quickly out into the hallway, and took her position directly in front of the entrance door, but a little distance back. From where we were, we could see everything that happened. She was magnificent as she stood there, proud and erect, her white hair piled high on her head, over a high smooth forehead; her finely chiselled features clear, even in that dim light. With her arms folded in front of her she waited, haughtily, a French aristocrat to her finger tips. Félix stood in silence near the door, and presently we heard the sound of heavy feet coming up the stone steps. Then a sharp, guttural order, followed by what we all knew must come—because we had been told so often by those who knew, that that was the way it had always happened—a terrific blow on the door with the butt of a rifle. That was the signal. Félix looked at his mistress.

"Open!" was all she said; and only her lips moved.

Félix unhesitatingly lifted the heavy iron bar, threw wide the doors,—and there in the night they stood, a grey-green mass, the Germans! I am not likely to forget that scene. At the door, a crowd of tall, powerful men, with clanking swords and spurs, with spiked helmets on their heads and revolvers at their belts; and under a dim lamp in the hallway, one white-haired woman, solitary, frigid and aloof as a mountain peak, and as immovable. I do not wonder there was a pause. Then the officer in command came forward a few steps, clicked his heels, saluted and performed in a most irreproachable manner the Prussian, "double", military bow; and a strange enough affair it is, first with the head and then at the waist, like a thought and an afterthought—indescribable! How well I remembered it, now that I saw it again! Still Madame de R—— did not move. At last the Commanding Officer broke the silence, and in almost perfect French (I could hardly detect an accent) said, with a certain superficial courtesy which astonishment seemed to wring from him:

"Madame, we must take possession here, but if you will make no difficulties for us, I will do what I can to protect you. You realize, of course, that you are now under my Emperor's rule; you are my Emperor's subjects; you are now in Germany."

"Monsieur le Colonel," answered the Comtesse de R——, icily, "for my servants, all of whom are aged, I accept the protection you offer, since I have no choice; I would also request it for the people of the village; but for ourselves —we have no need of it. You have taken possession of my house, but it is beyond your power to make us German," and without another word, she swept back into the *salon*, where we were waiting for her.

Out in the entrance hall we heard more guttural orders; we heard the rap, rap of spurred heels on the marble floor, and the heavy tread of feet,—I never knew how many or how few had come. We heard them going into every room, and then up the stairs to the chambers above; then down to the cellars,—evidently the whole house was being searched. The few old servants had had their orders to keep to their quarters, and we were in no mind to jeopardize their safety by sending for them. The Germans searched well and long; but finally the noise of heavy feet subsided, and there came instead the sound of merriment, of ringing glasses, as the toast went round, and of loud laughter. Supper, and a good one, was evidently in progress. There was an excellent wine cellar in the château, I believe. Then, after an hour or so, some of them seemed to make a noisy departure, for we heard again the sharp, guttural orders, and the sound of marching men moving out of the flagged court, and down the drive and away, probably on toward Ghent; but just outside the windows of the room where we sat (a room which looked through a small conservatory into a garden beyond) we heard a new sound—the steady tramp, tramp of a sentry along a little gravel path, so we knew that we were not alone!

It must have been toward the small hours of the night, but not one of us had spoken. The house had settled into quiet; we could not even guess who had remained, nor how well guarded we were, nor what was to happen to us next. We sat still and waited, but we hardly knew for what. Off in the distance a dog barked once—just one short bark. Someone must have seized him instantly, before he could bark again. It might have come from another world, so strangely of the borderland seem the homeliest sounds in the dead of night. Again that short, sharp bark, instantly suppressed—and then, suddenly, the night stillness was broken by distant, rapid firing.

"It is in the village," said Madame de R——, breaking our silence for the first time. "There is trouble there," and there was a note of deep anxiety in her voice. We sat motionless, intently listening, painfully alert; and outside, on the little gravel walk, the steady pacing of the sentry never stopped.

The sound of hurrying steps! For the second time that night we heard them. Someone was running along the path leading to the conservatory door, and, again, such a headlong sound it was!

"Halt!" cried a loud, hoarse voice out there in the dark of the night,—but the footsteps did not falter; they sounded, if anything, more precipitate as they came on, rushing now. The sharp crack of a rifle; a stifled cry of pain; the sound of something heavy falling; a long, sickening pause, when the very air seemed to congeal, and then, like a monstrous and distorted echo of some evil thing not heard but felt—a coarse laugh. With one swift movement

we all rose, and went to the conservatory door. With a turn of her hand, Madame de R—— tore it open, regardless of danger.

"Who is there?" she cried, in an imperious voice.

The light streaming out through the doorway showed us something which made our hearts stand still. There, almost at the threshold, lay the body of a young boy. Poor child! Had he thought to pass unchallenged a sentry on guard? Or had he known the terrible risks and yet had dared to take them? Who could tell? He lay so motionless and silent that we thought him dead, and we stooped to lift him, but the sentry interfered.

"Let him lie there," he growled, in an ugly voice, and in a kind of rough German dialect. And again: "Don't touch him! Leave him alone!" and he handled his rifle threateningly.

Then, to my complete surprise, I heard someone speaking in fluent German, in a sharp, peremptory voice, cold as steel,—a voice which I hardly recognized, though it was my own:

"Stand back!" it commanded. "By all the laws of war, the enemy is allowed to bury its dead. Stand back, I tell you!"—and we saw a strange phenomenon. If you speak to the average German in a firm and unquestioning tone of authority, if you "face him down" as it were, there is at least an even chance (probably more) that you can do what you like with him—unless he is intoxicated. During and since the War, I have heard many references to this phenomenon, and I remembered, now, how I had noticed it in my old Munich days. So this rough German, confronted squarely by an assumed, but outspoken authority, began to back off, irresolute. It may have been well for us, however, that, attracted by the noise, came swiftly the young officer who had evidently been left in charge when the others rode away, and he, believing the boy to be dead, allowed us to carry him in. By the dim light of the lamp we saw at once, and to our joy, that there was still a faint flicker of life, and we laid him on a couch, with his head resting on some cushions. He could not speak. Blood was oozing from his mouth, and running down his chin and over his neck in horrible, jagged little lines—shot through the lungs, I suppose. The pungent smell of blood was in the air. Madame de R—— knelt beside him, tenderly trying to wipe away the scarlet streams, feeling his limp hands, while we, standing a little back to give him all the air we could, watched him closely. He was trying to tell us something.

"It is one of the boys of our village," whispered Madame de R—— to me, in explanation.

He was a handsome lad, of about fourteen I should think, and, peasant though he was, approaching death gave him a touch of true nobility as he lay there, fighting to stammer out the message which had brought him. At last we heard a broken whisper, though the blood flowed faster for it, and we bent nearer to catch what he said:

"They have taken Monsieur le Curé . . . he was trying to protect us . . . they dragged him away . . . they will kill him . . . so I came . . ." but the blood now gushed from his mouth in a torrent, choking him, and he fell back

Slowly the grey shadow of death crept over his young face; slowly the eager light in his eyes grew dim, and then they glazed into an unseeing look,—and then we closed them for him.

"Brave and loyal child!" said Madame de R—— tenderly, as she bent once more to look at him, and then, since he was beyond our help, her mind passed quickly to the man who was in such danger and such need.

"Monsieur le Curé taken! That may mean torture and death," and I could see that she was going rapidly over some plan for his rescue.

I could not guess what that plan was, but I saw her again go to the conservatory door to open it. It was locked, and just outside stood the sentry. Retracing her steps she tried the door of the *salon* leading into the hallway. It also was locked, and as she moved the handle, a voice on the other side, warned us that a sentry had been posted there too. At some time, unknown to us, while we had been watching that dying boy, the keys had been silently turned in both these doors, and we were prisoners! Speaking through the door, we asked for the officer in command. There was no response. No forced escape was possible, and in any case, it would have meant the instant death of everyone in the house,—servants and all.

Whether or not what followed was done by the Germans (and in the particular way they did it) as a warning to Madame de R—— and her household, I never knew. It was dark out there in the garden, and we could not see; but we could hear, even though the tragedy took place at the far end. We heard the marching feet as they passed,—it was an execution, somehow we knew that, perhaps by the very *sound* in their steps; we heard the short pause while the condemned was being stood in place; the sharp order given, and then the rifle shots of the firing squad. As we learned for a certainty afterwards, it was the Curé of E——, his life in forfeit for his village folk.

I looked at Madame de R——, and her face was white and set; there was not a quiver in it. I saw her cross herself and then, without a word, she drew a chair close to the couch where the dead boy lay, and out of a small case which hung at her side, she took a rosary, and silently she sat there, telling her beads. Outside, all was quiet again; the night was far spent, and God only knew how many lives had been taken (and given!) during those long and awful night watches. As if she had heard my unexpressed wish, Madame de R—— began reciting the rosary aloud. I had never said a rosary in my life, —but I did that night. I repeated it after her like a child; we said it together, over and over and over, and while we were still saying it, the dawn came at last, cold and wet and dreary. It crept in at the windows and touched the pale forehead of the boy lying on the couch; it touched Madame de R——'s white hair, and her fine, clear eyes as she looked at me, and then, with what fortitude we could summon, we faced this first day of ours in occupied Belgium.

VOLUNTEER.

(*To be continued*)

CHHANDOGYA UPANISHAD

PART IV, SECTIONS 16–17; PART V, SECTIONS 1–2

THE LIFE OF THE DISCIPLE AS SACRIFICE

THIS Upanishad as a whole is traditionally related to the Sama Veda, the Veda of chants. The Sama Veda in its turn is the embodiment of the rites and ceremonies connected with the Soma sacrifice. But, as has already been recorded, the Soma sacrifice has two meanings, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say, two degrees: an outer and an inner; an exoteric and an esoteric degree.

The *Theosophical Glossary* has much to say of Soma, and of the Soma drink, made from a rare mountain plant by initiated Brahmans. A comparison is drawn between the Soma and the consecrated wine of the Eucharist. As through the consecrated wine the devout communicant is said to receive the divine spirit of the Lord, so through the draught of Soma the sacrificer is said to be raised to a higher consciousness and power, and enabled to exercise faculties of the soul. But it has been said that the Eucharist is also the outer symbol of an inner rite, a symbol of necessity exoteric, since it is in a degree open to all the faithful, and not alone to those who have undertaken and fulfilled the obligations of the religious life. The experience of the devout communicant may be real, but it can at best be only a reflection of the ceremony after which it is modelled.

So with the Soma rites. There is the outer and lesser rite, in which Soma is, as said in the work just cited, the juice of a mountain plant endowed with wonderful properties. This plant has already been compared with a similar plant used by certain of the remoter tribes in the mountains of Western Mexico, tribes who retain much of the traditional mysticism of Central America, which is in part recorded in the opening chapter of the *Popol Vuh*, the sacred book of the Guatemalan school. The juice of the Mexican plant, obtained with great difficulty from far distant mountains, is regarded as sacred, and is prepared with carefully performed rites, which are accompanied by the chanting of very ancient sacred hymns handed down from generation to generation among those who are initiates of this mystery. Fasting and purification are a part of this ceremony, as among stricter Christians they are a part of the preparation for the Eucharist. The Mexican devotees hold that their sacred drink confers upon those who receive it after due preparation, certain powers of prophecy and vision, powers which may be described as clairaudience and clairvoyance. This closely parallels the Vedic rite of the Soma sacrifice.

Yet all these forms are purely exoteric. They do not belong to the Mysteries: they only shadow them forth.

In the Mysteries, the forces and powers involved, the powers symbolized

by the mystical wine, or by the Soma, or the sacred drink of the Mexican Indians, are purely spiritual; powers which are brought to bear upon the disciple by the Initiator; powers which awaken his spiritual senses, altogether above the plane of the astral senses which are active in clairvoyance and clairaudience. They are, in fact, powers of the Logos, active and fully developed in the Master, and by the Master awakened in the fully prepared disciple. In that real ceremony the spiritual life of the disciple, liberated from its limitations, becomes one with the great spiritual life of the Master, and, through the Master's mediatorship, enters into the still greater life of the Logos, regaining, while the ceremony lasts, the realization of its primeval power and wisdom as an undivided part of the great Logos.

There was, in ancient Vedic days, another rite beside the Soma sacrifice, a rite full of lucid symbolic meaning, the rite of the consecrated fire. This holy fire on the altar, in which are made offerings of oil, or melted butter, is in all likelihood the original Vedic sacrifice, the only form of sacrifice in the oldest period, brought, it may well be, by the first Aryan immigrants from Central Asia, and anteceding by millenniums the sacrifice of animals which displaced and superseded it in a degenerate age. This rite also was familiar, as a daily ceremony, to the young disciples for whom these Instructions were worked out and compiled. Like the Soma sacrifice, it has its higher, inner counterpart. For, once more, it is a symbol of Initiation. As the oil is added to the holy fire, living symbol of the Spirit, so the life and aspiration of the disciple are added, in the great rite, to the living, everlasting flame which is the Light of the Logos. As the oil becomes one with the flame, so the disciple's spirit is made one with the great Spirit. The purpose of the sections here translated seems to be to bridge over, in the disciple's understanding, the space between the outer and the inner rite; to make the more familiar a stepping stone to the mysterious ceremony for which he is being prepared.

The first section begins by telling him that the Great Breath is sacrifice; the Great Breath which is the Logos, makes the sacrifice of self-limitation, in order that the manifested worlds may be brought into being; the Voice breaks the eternal silence in order that the lesser voices of animate beings may be born. But creation, manifestation, is only half of the work of the Logos. The other half is redemption, salvation; the scattered worlds, animate beings, must be purified and led homeward, so that both they and the Logos may attain to consummation. Therefore, since the Great Breath purifies all that is in the world, it is sacrifice.

Of this the two paths are Mind and Voice; Mind, the inner, latent, subjective side of every being; Voice, the symbol of what is uttered, the spoken thought, the outer and active, the objective. Then comes the parallel with the familiar sacrificial rite. In this rite, certain priests take part, under the guidance of an overseer, called here the Brahmâ. This is the older form of what later became the designation of the priestly caste, but it here means the chief officiant, one who so thoroughly knows the ceremonies and chants of sacrifice, that he stands by to safeguard the separate acts of the lesser officiants.

It is easy to discern the parallel between this rite and the work of the disciple. The Brahmâ, the overseer, in the disciple's sacrifice, is at once the Higher Self of the disciple, and the disciple's Master, who interprets to the disciple the will and purpose of his still imperfectly recognized Higher Self. The two paths, the inner and the outer, are right meditation and right action. The Brahmâ, as overseer, perfects the disciple's meditation; that is, his Master helps him rightly to meditate by sharing his meditation. The three subordinate priests, representing the powers of the disciple, make perfect his actions, which are symbolized by the preparation, the making of the offering, and the chant which accompanies it,—the last, the disciple's service of praise and adoration.

As earlier, the morning invocation symbolizes the opening stage of the disciple's path, his first apprenticeship, while he is passing through the successive degrees of probation. Therefore we are told that where, after the morning invocation has begun, before the chant is ended, the Brahmâ priest breaks silence, the disciple perfects but one of the two paths; the other is cut short. For the Brahmâ priest breaks silence and intervenes only to avert the dangerous effects of some blunder committed by the assistant priests; that is, the Master intervenes only to avert the effects of some failure on the disciple's part, whether a failure in meditation, leading to wrong psychical development, or any failure in action, causing some dangerous complication of Karma. While all goes well, the Master does not intervene, though he watches with helpful solicitude every effort of the disciple. So, from failure in meditation, or in action, the "sacrifice" of the disciple goes awry. Having begun the sacrifice, he becomes worse. The disciple is, as the Upanishad graphically says, like a one-legged man trying to walk, or like a chariot with one wheel missing.

But where both meditation and action are rightly carried out, all fares well with the disciple, and with his "sacrifice." Having begun the sacrifice, he becomes better. He makes good progress on the path. So through this symbolic reference to the familiar rite, the disciple on probation is given a friendly warning: his meditation and his action must both be perfected, if he is to go forward along the difficult path, which is, as said elsewhere, hard to tread as a razor's edge.

The passage which follows, and which is once more a parable of the Great Breath, the Logos, conveys the lesson which is needed to supplement this warning. It tells the disciple in what way, through what powers, he may repair his errors of omission or commission, and set his feet once more firmly on the path. And the explanation is profoundly philosophical.

We are once more reminded of the fundamental teaching of the *Mândûkya Upanishad*,—the Eternal, manifested in four degrees, in four worlds, to which correspond four vestures. These four worlds are here called Lord of beings, Heavens, Mid-space, Earth. In these worlds, considered at first as abstractions, potencies, privations, the Logos acts, exerting its creative power, and in each draws forth into activity the potency which was latent. From the

lowest of the four worlds, as the outermost point of the arc, the Logos draws forth its essence, Fire; that is, the vital fire or force which energizes all forms of animate being upon the earth, or on any world of like texture. From the second world, counting from below, the Logos draws forth its potency, here called the Great Breath, corresponding to the outer aspect of cosmic electricity, or what may be called the pure and unsullied astral light, in contradistinction to the heavy astral atmosphere which is an emanation of human thoughts and desires. From the third world, still counting from below, the Logos draws forth the power called the Sun, the spiritual electricity of the cosmos, the higher aspect of the Akasha.

Each of the three lower worlds has its symbolic syllable; each is represented, according to the law of correspondences, by one of the three Vedas: the symbolic syllables are Bhûr, Bhuvar, Svar; to which correspond the three Vedas, Rig, Yajur and Sama, in ascending scale. This use of the three Vedas is really very simple and, for the young disciples who had long been familiar with the relation between them, very vivid and illuminating. The verses of the Rig Veda provide the raw material of the chants, the words which, inspired by musical tones, become the magical incantations. The Yajur provides the frame, or system, in accordance with which the chants are to be used. The Sama is the inspired chant itself, full of magical power. So the earth-world, in which is the outermost vesture of the disciple, supplies the raw material for his discipleship, the material for his apprenticeship. He must then learn the rules of the new life in the world of the second vesture; and, finally, enter on the third stage, the vesture of the magical song. At the great consummation comes the radiant vesture, in which he is one with the Logos.

The divine secret running through the whole grand progression, and making possible his spiritual ascent, is that the same powers of the Logos are in each world, in each vesture; there is no disjunction nor solution of continuity. Therefore, if aught go awry, if aught be faulty or incomplete at any stage of the way, the remedy is there; divine powers are within his reach to repair what is amiss. The disciple must evoke the heavenly power, by faith and adoration, and, through its potent aid he will once more be set firmly on the path. Thus, in the first degree, by the essence of the Rig verses, by the virtue of the Rig verses, he makes good the injury; that is, by evoking the divine power which was lacking, or deficient, whether in his meditation or in his action, he restores his spiritual life to symmetry and fulness: and so with the succeeding degrees.

Then comes the strange simile of the metals, which, we may believe, had their symbolic correspondences, as they had among the ancient Chaldeans; correspondences at once astrological and mystical. And finally we are told that the "sacrifice" is perfect, in which there is a Brahmâ overseer who thus knows; the path of the disciple is made safe by the ever-watchful power of his Master, who is the overseer of his "sacrifice."

He who knows the most venerable and best becomes the most venerable and

best: a simple sentence, yet one which marks the profound difference in character and ideal between the Eastern Wisdom and our self-assured modern sciences. Those who study the latter, gain a knowledge of astronomy, but they do not expect to inherit thereby the radiance of the stars. Those who study chemistry may grow familiar with the mysteries of the elements, but they do not look forward to oneness with the primal Being which generates the elements. The physicist may measure the speed of light but he does not look forward to wearing a vesture of the colour of the sun. The goal of the Eastern Wisdom is not amassing information, but becoming Wisdom itself, the illimitable Logos, in undivided being. Therefore, to him who knows that hidden treasure, the Divine Realm, all things bring treasure, his own desires and the Bright Powers and men, as he looks earnestly into their hearts.

The vivid parable which follows, when the vital powers ask the Father, "Master, which of us is the best?" is designed to impress once again upon the disciple that all his powers, without exception, are powers of the Logos, lesser breaths of that Great Breath. It is the same parable as that taught by the Vedic Master, in the second answer of the "Upanishad of the Questions," and has the same profound meaning.. In that meaning lie both the responsibility of the disciple and his immortal hope.

Finally, we have yet another parallel between the rites with which the disciple has been familiar from childhood, and the new life on which he seeks to enter, through his desire to go to the Great One. The new moon signifies the new cycle of life on which he is entering, through the rite of Consecration. The mixed potion is the mystical prototype of the Soma; the melted butter poured into the altar fire is his own aspiration, seeking to enter into the Logos. With adoration he meditates on the might of the Giver of all.

Finally there is the strange symbol of the Woman. This is the personified Sophia, or, in Sanskrit, Uma, daughter of the Snowy Mountain, "the Woman, greatly radiant," of *Kena Upanishad.*

THE GREAT BREATH AS SACRIFICE

This, verily, is sacrifice, namely, the Great Breath, since it purifies all that is in the world. Because the Great Breath purifies all that is in the world, therefore it is sacrifice.

Of this the two paths are Mind and Voice.

Through Mind the Brahmâ priest, as overseer, perfects one. Through Voice the priest who makes the offering, the priest who prepares it, the priest who chants, perfect the other.

Where, after the morning invocation has begun, before the chant is ended, the Brahmâ priest breaks silence, he perfects but one of the two paths; the other is cut short.

And so, as a one-legged man walking, or as a chariot moving on one wheel, goes awry, thus, verily, his sacrifice goes awry. He who offers the sacrifice goes awry after his sacrifice has gone awry. Having begun the sacrifice, he becomes worse.

And so where, after the morning invocation has begun, the Brahmâ priest does not break silence before the chant is ended, they, verily, perfect both paths, nor is one of them cut short.

And so, as a two-legged man walking, or as a chariot moving on both wheels, is steady, thus, verily, his sacrifice is steady. He who offers the sacrifice is steady after his sacrifice is steady. Having begun the sacrifice, he becomes better.

The Lord of beings brooded with fervour over the worlds. Of them, brooded over with fervour, he drew forth the essences: from Earth, Fire; from the Mid-space, the Great Breath; from the Heavens, the Sun.

The Lord of beings brooded over these three divinities. Of them, brooded over with fervour, he drew forth the essences: from Fire, the Rig verses; from the Great Breath, the Yajur formulas; from the Sun, the Sama chants.

The Lord of beings brooded with fervour over this threefold Wisdom. Of it, brooded over with fervour, he drew forth the essences: from the Rig verses, Bhûr (Earth); from the Yajur formulas, Bhuvar (Mid-world); from the Sama chants, Svar (Heaven).

So, if aught should go awry with the Rig verses, he should make an oblation in the household fire, saying "Bhûr! Adoration!" Thus by the essence of the Rig verses, by the virtue of the Rig verses, he makes good the injury of the Rig verses to the sacrifice.

And so, if aught should go awry with the Yajur formulas, he should make an oblation in the southern fire, saying "Bhuvar! Adoration!" Thus by the essence of the Yajur formulas, by the virtue of the Yajur formulas, he makes good the injury of the Yajur formulas to the sacrifice.

And so, if aught should go awry with the Sama chants, he should make an oblation in the fire of oblation, saying "Svar! Adoration!" Thus by the essence of the Sama chants, by the virtue of the Sama chants, he makes good the injury of the Sama chants to the sacrifice.

Then, as through a flux one would join gold; through gold, silver; through silver, tin; through tin, lead; through lead, iron; through iron, wood; or wood through leather; even so through the virtue of these worlds, of the divinities, of this triple wisdom, he makes good what is astray in the sacrifice. Cured of weakness, verily, is that sacrifice, in which there is a Brahmâ overseer who thus knows.

That sacrifice leads northward in which there is a Brahmâ overseer who thus knows. This is the praise of the Brahmâ overseer who thus knows:

Whithersoever he turns, that way follows the son of man;

The Brahmâ overseer alone guards the sacrificers like a steed.

The Brahmâ overseer who thus knows, verily, guards the sacrifice, the sacrificer and all the ministrants. Therefore let him make one who thus knows his overseer; not one who knows not thus,—not one who knows not thus.

He, verily, who knows the most venerable and the best becomes the most

venerable and the best. The Great Breath, verily, is the most venerable and the best.

He, verily, who knows the most excellent becomes most excellent of his own people. Voice, verily, is the most excellent.

He, verily, who knows the firm foundation stands firm both in this world and in that. Seeing, verily, is the firm foundation.

He, verily, who knows the treasure, to him his desires bring treasure, and the Bright Powers, and men. Hearing, verily, is the treasure.

He, verily, who knows the abode becomes the abode of his own people. Mind, verily, is the abode.

And so the vital powers contended among themselves as to which of them was the better, each one saying, "I am the better! I am the better!"

The vital powers, going to the Lord of beings, to the Father, said, "Master which of us is the best?"

To them He said, "That one of you through whose going forth the body is seen to be most afflicted, that one is the best of you!"

So Voice went forth. Going forth for a cycle and then returning, Voice said, "How have ye been able to live without me?"

"As those who are dumb, not speaking, yet breathing with the breath, seeing with sight, hearing through the power of hearing, thinking through the mind; thus." Voice entered in again.

Then Seeing went forth. Going forth for a cycle and then returning, Seeing said, "How have ye been able to live without me?"

"As those who are blind, not seeing, yet breathing with the breath, speaking with the voice, hearing through the power of hearing, thinking through the mind; thus." Seeing entered in again.

Then Hearing went forth. Going forth for a cycle and then returning, Hearing said, "How have ye been able to live without me?"

"As those who are deaf, not hearing, yet breathing with the breath, speaking with the voice, seeing with sight, thinking through the mind; thus." Hearing entered in again.

Then Mind went forth. Going forth for a cycle and then returning, Mind said, "How have ye been able to live without me?"

"As foolish children, mindless, yet breathing with the breath, speaking with the voice, seeing with sight, hearing through the power of hearing; thus." Mind entered in again.

Then, when the Breath would have gone forth, as a strong horse might drag away his foot-ropes, so did the Breath drag away the lesser vital powers with him. Drawing near to the Breath, they said, "Master! Be thus here with us! Thou art the best of us! Go not forth!"

To the Breath, Voice then said, "If I am most excellent, then thou art most excellent!"

Then Seeing said to him, "If I am the firm foundation, then thou art the firm foundation!"

Then Hearing said to him, "If I am the treasure, then thou art the treasure!"

Then Mind said to him, "If I am the abode, then thou art the abode!"

Therefore they call them not Voices, nor Seeings, nor Hearings, nor Minds, but they call them Life-breaths. For the Breath is all these powers.

The Breath said, "What will be my food?"

The powers said, "Whatsoever there is, even to dogs and birds!"

Therefore this is the food of the Breath. For the Breath is obviously its name. Nor, of a truth, is there aught which is not food for him who thus knows.

The Breath said, "What will be my vesture?"

The powers said, "The waters!"

Therefore those who are about to eat invest the Breath both before and after with the waters. For the Breath tends to receive a vesture. It remains not naked.

Therefore Satyakama, son of Jabala, declaring this to Goshruti, son of Vyaghrapada, said, "If one should declare this to a dry stump, branches would be born from it, leaves would unfold themselves!"

And so, if he should desire to go to the Great One, performing the rite of Consecration at the new moon, let him on the night of the full moon mingle a potion of all herbs with curdled milk and honey.

"To the most venerable and the best, adoration!"—saying this, and making an oblation of melted butter in the altar fire, he should add what remains to the potion.

"To the most excellent, adoration!"—saying this, and making an oblation of melted butter in the altar fire, he should add what remains to the potion.

"To the firm foundation, adoration!",—saying this, and making an oblation of melted butter in the altar fire, he should add what remains to the potion.

"To the treasure, adoration!",—saying this, and making an oblation of melted butter in the altar fire, he should add what remains to the potion.

"To the abode, adoration!",—saying this, and making an oblation of melted butter in the altar fire, he should add what remains to the potion.

Then drawing back, taking the potion between his hands, he forms these words without uttering them aloud: "Thou art He by name, for all this universe is at home in Thee! Thou art most venerable and best, the Ruler, the Overlord! The power which is most venerable and best, the power of Ruler and Overlord, let Him cause to come to me! Let me be all this universe!"

And so, of a truth, through this Rig verse, taken measure by measure, he tastes the potion:

"Of the spiritual Sun we choose—"

Saying this, he tastes the potion;

"—the food, of that Divinity—"

Saying this, he tastes the potion;

"—the best, the all-sustaining food,—"

Saying this, he tastes the potion;

"—let us meditate on the might of the Giver of all!"

Saying this, he drinks it all.

Then, when he has cleansed the drinking cup, or the vessel, he rests on the West side of the altar fire, on a skin or upon the earth, restraining the voice, self-controlled. If he should behold the Woman, let him know that the work has been completed.

Therefore there is this verse:

"When in work inspired by desire
He beholds the Woman in his vision,
Then he may know his success
By this appearance in his vision,
—by this appearance in his vision."

C. J.

God does not regard what amount of evil each man may be able to do, but what amount of evil he may have a mind to do.—ST. GREGORY.

Who shoots at the midday sun, though he be sure he shall never hit the mark, yet as sure he is he shall shoot higher than he who aims at a bush.—SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

MY TWENTY-FIRST CONVENTION

WHEN a little exercise in arithmetic showed that I was approaching my twenty-first year of consecutive attendance at T. S. Conventions, I began to brood upon that disclosure. Twenty-one years of extraordinary privilege! What have I to show as the result of that opportunity? How much richer is my life, by reason of such advantage, than that of a member in Czecho-Slovakia or Gateshead or Rio de Janeiro, who has never been present at a single Convention? My first visit to New York at the end of April, I remember with some distinctness—the first meeting with the older members could not but be memorable; after that, these annual April days are not distinct,—they have been very much a matter of course, days brought by the calendar, which, in February, gives us Lincoln's and Washington's Birthdays, and, later in the summer, the Republican and the Democratic Conventions.

Suppose a kindly judge, like Karma, were to place in the balances, on one side, people who have attended many Conventions, and, on the other, those for whom no Convention was ever called, such as the group of Carlyle, Matthew Arnold, George Eliot, Thackeray, Clough,[1] and Ruskin, back in 1870, before The Theosophical Society had been founded—what might the verdict be? What do members of the T. S.—members of long standing—possess or practise that distinguishes them from the less favoured generation of 1870?

To the men of 1870, human life in the world appeared very much as it does to some of us; they, likewise, saw the world as "Vanity Fair," where the futility of all merely human endeavour is demonstrated.

> The world which seems
> To lie before us like a land of dreams,
> So various, so beautiful, so new,
> Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
> Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain.

That sentiment, it should be noted, does not represent a romantic pose, or the sad outlook of a disappointed and discouraged man. It is the sober judgment of a successful man of letters who was also a happy husband and father. Matthew Arnold had received a sufficient share of bread, butter, and pudding, and he had made a completely happy marriage; but he knew by experience that "man does not live by bread alone",—that all the bacon and pudding in the world, and a thousand felicitous marriages, could not for a moment satisfy a soul.

Arnold and his contemporaries were obviously in possession of that half of

[1] Thackeray and Clough died before 1870, but they are typical of the period.

Truth which is clear to many members of the T. S., namely, that all worldly ambition and endeavour is vain and fruitless. There is another half, however, that is necessary to make up the whole Truth, and this second, paradoxical, half is, that those who have followed the star of Theosophy, can do all things through Members of the Lodge who stand ready to guide and strengthen them. It is quite likely that up to the present moment of our lives, the proffered guidance and strengthening may have been unnoticed or refused; but in our very next duty, we may, if we will, accept it.

The second half of Truth, necessary to make the whole, members of the T. S. know, at least, theoretically; and it is our shame if we do not know it practically. The men of 1870, so far less favoured than we, did not know it at all. Only half a loaf of the Bread of Life was their sustenance, while to us has been given the whole loaf. Yet, what loyal and courageous soldiers they were!

Consider briefly their inner and outer environment. How great a change took place in the world between 1810, the period of Jane Austen's maturity, and 1870, the period of George Eliot's maturity. What made the provincial life of England change radically in the course of sixty years? Jane Austen's friends had no ache of body or heart that would not vanish at the announcement of a ball, or in the presence of handsome soldiers, or upon the arrival of a distinguished visitor for whom additional dinner parties could be planned. And George Eliot's friends: all the balls, dinner parties and military men in the world could not have satisfied Maggie Tulliver or Dorothea Brook. Maggie craved but one Presence—that which, intuitively, she felt to be hidden within the leaves of the *Imitation of Christ;* she felt It, but, alone, could not reach It. Dorothea Brook of *Middlemarch* longed for a *key* that would unlock the mystery concealed in all mythologies, and open to her a spacious height of intellectual freedom. That the key could be found, she felt, intuitively; but, alone, she could not close her fingers upon it. What had happened to bring, over the peaceful country-side of England, the change that is presented in this contrast? Why should Jane Austen's picture of provincial life be so cheerful, while *Middlemarch* is one of the dreariest stories in the world?

The answer would seem to be contained partly in the history of the Lodge Force that had been poured down during the cycle from 1775 to 1800. Men having failed to organize a body which could serve as vehicle for that Force, it was scattered and diffused throughout the world, instead of being concentrated into a guiding ray of light. The diffused Lodge Force, as aspiration, entered into such as were receptive to it,—and the group of 1870 (numbering the son, as well as the favourite pupil, of Thomas Arnold of Rugby) was receptive. From their hearts rose flames of aspiration which endeavoured to rejoin the Parent Flame, but the gap between earth and the Lodge was too great for that leap. There was no intermediary between those mortals and the Great Brothers; there was no bridge, no guide toward the Lodge, no one to help solve their perplexities, no organization, no Society, no older students of Theosophy, no Convention.

For the time, the Member of the Lodge who would appear to be their natural guide, seemed inaccessible, since, though loyal to Him in heart, their minds could not surmount the blank wall of books like Strauss's *Life of Jesus* (which George Eliot translated), and Renan's *Life of Jesus*, which circulated freely among Matthew Arnold's friends. The influence of such writings clouded with doubt and negation what had been happy beliefs.

> The sea is calm to-night,
> The tide is full, the moon lies fair
> Upon the straits . . . .
> Listen! you hear the grating roar
> Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
> At their return, up the high strand,
> Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
> With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
> The eternal note of sadness in.
> . . . . The sea of faith
> Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
> Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
> But *now* I only hear
> Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
> Retreating, to the breath
> Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
> And naked shingles of the world.

Again:

> While we believed, on earth he went,
> And open stood his grave,
> Men call'd from chamber, church and tent;
> And Christ was by to save.
>
> Now he is dead! Far hence he lies
> In the lorn Syrian town;
> And on his grave, with shining eyes,
> The Syrian stars look down.[2]

"Now he is dead!" To the death-knell in those words, the men and women of 1870, by a reaction of loyalty, made themselves worthy of emulation. If those words were true, the logical inference must be that the world's thread of connection with the supernatural had been severed. The reaction of Arnold and his friends proved once more that "man does not live by bread alone"; that even mere physical life cannot be maintained unless from the supernatural world there proceed a guiding incentive. The sceptics felt that

[2] Matthew Arnold.

they had affirmed their side of the argument, proving (to their own satisfaction) that no man comes back from the grave. In rebuttal, there seemed nothing for the opposing side to assert, save that a wraith may, and often does, issue from an unopened sepulchre; and though a wraith is only a whiff of vapour, nevertheless that whiff must be either explained or else explained away. Robbed of the Living Body in which hitherto they had hoped, the men and women of 1870 transferred their allegiance to the frail insubstantiality that alone remained to them—a phantom. The world called to them to "eat, drink and be merry", seeing that, no hope for the future remaining, there could be no reason to struggle in the present for a nobler mode of life. Arnold and his associates would not heed that mocking invitation to mingle with the swine, and, driven against the wall though they were, they could not be defeated or silenced. "The light we sought is shining still", again and again they replied. They had not succeeded, they had not found, but they *knew* that the flame of aspiration in their hearts was not of earth; that, some day, it must surely find its way back home.

Matthew Arnold's two longer poems, the "Scholar Gypsy", and "Thyrsis" (commemorating the death of Clough), record the determination to hold true to an ancient loyalty. The figure of the Scholar Gypsy himself, a wraith of the (alleged) unrisen Christ, is their centre of hope, and beckons them onward upon their quest, though so far it has been fruitless.

> The light we sought is shining still,
> This does not come with houses or with gold,
> With place, with honour, and a flattering crew;
> 'Tis not in the world's market bought and sold—
> But the smooth-slipping weeks
> Drop by, and leave its seeker still untired;
> Out of the heed of mortals he is gone,
> He wends unfollow'd, he must house alone;
> Yet on he fares, by his own heart inspired.

Courageous, loyal soldiers: faithful to a mere wraith! how admirable they stand in contrast with this generation of twenty-one Conventions,—twenty-one years in the actual presence of living Masters. Like the men of Nineveh, the group of 1870 might perhaps rise in judgment with this generation and condemn it, seeing that, like the men of Jerusalem, we have turned to such slight profit the aid offered by the Great Ones, year after year, as they have stood with us.

From this contrast of opportunities, what practical conclusion shall we draw? what resolution to be carried into daily life? It seems to be a truism that gratitude—even to the Lodge and the Founders and torch-bearers—is too heavy a load for ordinary human nature to carry; a grateful man means a fine and far developed nature. On the other hand, even average men wish other men to be grateful to them. When a high motive fails us, such as the

gratitude we owe,—why not make use of a lower appeal: the gratitude of those whom we could put in our debt. We could put the whole world in our debt. We could put the souls of those we love, for ever in our debt. We could, if we wished, repay the group of 1870 a hundredfold,—besides putting them in our debt. Many of us owe them much. From their poverty, their half loaf, they gave with unstinted generosity. Many times we have heard, quoted for our encouragement, when we were downcast, the lines of Matthew Arnold:

> Tasks in hours of insight will'd
> Can be through hours of gloom fulfill'd.

Many times we have been lifted out of our self-centredness by the noble example or inspiring ideals of those who, unlike us, had to struggle against darkness, as well as against themselves,—not only the group of 1870, but all whose writings, coming down from the past, aided us on our way toward Theosophy. It is now in our power to preserve for them the Bridge, built since their day, by the labours and sacrifices of others; to preserve the organism, the Society, which did not exist in their day; to preserve the possibility of Conventions, such as we have experienced, and from which, it may be believed, some of those older writers, when they awake to their next day of work, would draw such immense profit. Thus we may be the means of answering that prayer of Clough's (a prayer from a sincere heart), who prayed because his school master, Thomas Arnold, had taught him to pray, though, in later life, he did not know to whom he should pray. Clough wrote (not knowing of the Lodge):

> One port, methought, alike they sought,
> One purpose hold, where'er they fare.
> O bounding breeze, O rushing seas,
> At last, at last, unite them there.

C. C. C.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

THE Convention of The Theosophical Society was still echoing in our minds and hearts, and this was our first opportunity to discuss it. The Recorder volunteered the remark that the older members—the so-called Ancients—seemed to consider it the best Convention so far held, basing their opinion upon the admirable way in which the younger members had conducted the meeting of the New York Branch immediately following the Convention. "They showed real growth,—in depth of feeling, in philosophic grasp, in poise, in dignity and in terms of the 'atmosphere' they created. As one of the Ancients said, 'It made our hearts glad to see it',—and I do not wonder that it did, because, after all, the only real test of seniority in the T. S. is devotion to its principles and spirit, with corresponding concern about its future: and the promise of that evening meeting could not have been more gratifying."

"I think", said the Philosopher, "that the Convention must have meant a new start for all of us, regardless of years or experience; and that, surely, is the ultimate test of its fruitfulness. There may have been reactions, nervous or physical; possibly, in some cases, a momentary 'slump'; but I am confident that its fruit, by this time, must be manifest to the high gods as a greater sense of unity and responsibility, with a more positive determination to cut free from the personal self, and to fix our attention on things above. It must have seemed to all of us as if some Great Soul out of the invisible had cried: 'You will yet give all your heart to me. I have called and you must follow. Keep your eyes ever on me. Lift them up; they have been down long enough.' "

Someone quoted: " '. . . to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.' "

"Certain questions which were put to me after the Convention," one of the speakers at its sessions now said, "are, I suggest, well worthy of consideration in the 'Screen.' The first was: 'Can it be proper, at a Convention of the T.S., to give so much attention to national and international problems?'

"My answer was that some of us have been given the opportunity to study the principles of Theosophy for many years, and to apply them in our own lives; and that now—on the principle of 'now thou must sow'—we are expected to study their application to the problems of the world around us, in all fields of human conflict and endeavour. The interests of Masters are universal, and we, who aspire to be their disciples, cannot properly confine our interests to matters which affect us immediately and personally. Art, music, literature, commerce, science, as well as philosophy and religion, affect the evolution of man and his soul's salvation. Masters of Wisdom cannot be indifferent to such things, any more than wise parents can be indifferent to the games

their children play, or to the lessons they are taught. Clearly, methods of government, and the principles upon which such methods ought to be based, and the dealings of nations with each other, must influence human progress vitally. I did not say this, but might have added that perhaps, at some time in the distant future—infinitely distant I hope—we may be assigned the task of guiding an infant planet through its birth-throes and teething, and of applying then, unaided, our understanding of theosophical principles to the satisfactory development of our charge. In any case, the sooner we realize that, without scattering our limited energies, it is our duty to co-operate with the Masters in all their efforts for the welfare of mankind, in so far as these may be known to us,—the better off we shall be, intellectually and morally, seeing that our studies must necessarily broaden our sympathies and deepen our insight into the problems involved.

"The fact that, at a Convention of The Theosophical Society, the duties of nations can be discussed on the basis of principle, not only shows a real advance over the possibilities of years ago, when no more than the duties of individuals could profitably be considered, but also shows how unique the attainment of the Society is: for what other international organization, Freemasonry *not* excepted, could discuss with freedom and good feeling, as we did, the question of the Allied debts to America,—much less reach unanimous conclusions!"

"It was a remarkable achievement", our Visitor commented. "May I ask how you account for it?"

"Nothing but an understanding of the fundamental principles of Theosophy, could have made it possible", said the Historian. "Try to imagine the delegates at any Church Convention, or, for that matter, the Bishops of any Church, assembled in New York, doing likewise: the American Bishops of the Episcopal, Methodist, or Roman Catholic Church, declaring unanimously, in the name of Christ, or on grounds of *noblesse oblige* or of common decency, that this country's behaviour about the Allied debts has been, and is, nothing short of a disgrace!"

"Many orthodox Christians", the Philosopher now said, "confine their religion to Sundays; others, to their own trials, temptations, and personal problems. These would say that it helps them to live better lives; and I believe it does. The trouble is that they have no metaphysical or philosophical basis for the faith that is in them; no conception of universal spiritual law; no idea that political economy, properly understood, includes primarily the play of spiritual and moral factors, of which the physical are merely the effect. Inevitably, therefore, it would seem strange to such people that we should see in national and international life, merely an extension, as it were, of our own. Nations are entities, as yet undeveloped, but destined someday (those that survive) to become conscious disciples of the Masters. History is almost meaningless unless we see in it an effort to evolve vehicles capable of expressing some particular aspect of the World Soul. There is an exact analogy between the development of an individual and that of a nation. Just as personalities

die and disappear, the outer forms of nations die and disappear, their souls reincarnating, after a long interval, in other national forms, as a further step toward complete embodiment."

"Are you suggesting", asked the Student, "that England or France or the United States, is in fact a soul, temporarily occupying a body, and that someday these bodies, which we call nations, must die, the souls passing on to occupy new bodies, to be developed much as these present national bodies were developed?"

"I doubt if the nations, as such", the Philosopher replied, "have as yet reached that stage of evolution corresponding to the incoming of the Mânasaputra, of which *The Secret Doctrine* tells us. I think they correspond to Lunar Pitris, and are souls only in that sense. We are, however, getting into rather deep water. For the purposes of the 'Screen', it will be more helpful if we keep to general principles, as not many of our readers are students of *The Secret Doctrine*,—yet!

"Thus: there is only one study, so far as I can see, that is of real and permanent interest,—the study of life. This is partly because life is movement, perpetual movement, round and toward a centre which, diagrammatically, may be considered as motionless (God), but which really is the quintessence of motion, and its Cause. Art is a movement, literature is a movement, so, above all, is religion. Human nature, history, are movements,—each of them means to a specific end, instruments of a divine purpose, each intended to blend with the others in the production, or, better, the revelation of perfect Beauty, Wisdom, Joy. To study things as stationary, or to study stationary things (if there be any), is to induce death, intellectual and moral; is to be small and narrow-minded: is to be *dull*."

"What other questions were put to you?" asked the Recorder, turning to the earlier speaker.

"I was asked how we can really forgive unless we also forget. Reference was made to the criticism, during the Convention, of Winston Spencer Churchill's statement: 'Everyone remembers (and tries to forget) the German occupation of Belgium.' My friend, the questioner, suggested that if, for instance, a man 'has words' with his sister, and, later, they forgive one another but do not forget,—their reconciliation is superficial and incomplete. It was evident, however, that he was also finding it difficult to base his attitude toward Germany on what he understood to be Christian principles.

"This is a question that was discussed fully and often in the pages of the QUARTERLY during the War; but that, after all, was more than ten years ago, so it may be as well to touch on it again, though briefly. First, then, on the general subject of forgiveness, the Christian Master laid down this rule: 'If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive them.' As Germany has not even gone through the motions of repentance, it would be contrary to the rule of Christ to forgive her; and that, incidentally, is some-

thing that the leaders of the Y. M. C. A., and many clergymen of all denominations, see fit to overlook.

"It should also be remembered that if a man injures me personally, it is one thing, while if he injures a woman or a child or a cripple, it may be my duty to hit him before he knows what has happened. Moral indignation and wrath, arising out of injury done to another, should be entirely impersonal, and is essentially different from the rage of a man whose will has been crossed or whose feelings have been hurt, and whose anger is personal and shallow. Those who tell us that we ought to forgive Germany, prove themselves heartless and inhuman,—as only a sentimentalist, or an absolutely selfish person, can be.

"Even when it is clearly our duty to forgive, it does not follow in the least that it is our duty to forget. A servant breaks something; confesses, expresses regret, and is forgiven. It happens again, and perhaps again. If you forget that your servant is clumsy and is likely to drop things, so much the worse for you; and if you forget to the extent of recommending your servant to a friend as perfect, you will be guilty of a grave offence. I do not see how it can be right to forget anything, so long as we remember facts (*the truth*), instead of half truths or untruths, and our own feelings about them: which are the things that most people remember. As to forgetting what Germany has done,—all I can say is, it would be worse than folly; it would be criminal. Suppose I have a neighbour who has periodical fits of pyromania. Once in so often, he sets fire to my house. Suppose the best,—that the poor man is full of remorse between-whiles (which Germany certainly is not). If I live alone in the house, and am so peculiarly constituted that I have no objection to being burned alive, I suppose I should have the right to forget as well as to forgive; but if I have a mother and wife and children, or so much as a dog in the house with me, then to forget the danger of my neighbour's outbreaks, and not to provide against them, would prove me to be just as wild a lunatic in my way, as he, in his. Further, if I had a second neighbour, whose house had not been attacked—perhaps a convenient Pond between him and the pyromaniac—who assured me, in the name of Christ, that it was very wicked of me to keep loaded guns in my front hall, and that I ought to forgive and forget the periodic 'errors' of neighbour number one,—I should feel inclined to say to him what I feel inclined to say to the leaders of the Y. M. C. A., and to all those who, whether on sentimental or commercial grounds, urge the Allied peoples to 'let bygones be bygones.'"

"I agree with every word you have said", commented the Philosopher, "but before we leave the subject of forgiveness, I do think that something should be added in regard to the failure of many people to forgive, when they unquestionably ought to do so, and when they are entirely satisfied that they have. Real forgiveness is an achievement, to which all of us should aspire. The customary formula is: 'He behaved abominably, but I have forgiven him.' This means, in plain words, that the person who forgives, sets himself up as a model of virtue, having in no way been responsible for the other's misconduct,

and having now added the heroic virtue of forgiveness to original innocence and primordial superiority. Sometimes, of course, there are qualifying expressions —glittering generalities—such as, 'I know I'm not perfect, but . . .' or, 'I may be trying, but . . .' These, on the face of it, are meaningless. No one really forgives until, like Christ, he sees himself as responsible for the sin of the offender. The attitude and feeling of Christ were, in a sense, gratuitous; superhuman love drove him to place himself between divine Justice, or Karma, and the wickedness of men. This is beyond us, though we should strive for it. What is not beyond any of us is to force our unwilling lower nature to realize that, whatever the faults of our friend, our faults, in the particular case at issue, were greater,—things we said or left unsaid, our lack of tact and of sympathy, our previous record of self-centredness or disloyalty,—until we have piled up such cause for sorrow that the sense of it floods over and submerges our sense of offence. Then, when there is nothing left but a desire to be forgiven; when we no longer are conscious of anything to forgive, then, and then only, as between friends, is forgiveness perfect.

"Something of this is seen in the agonizing forgiveness of a mother whose beloved child has sinned: she knows what her child has done—she does not attempt to minimize that; she may feel it her duty, for his sake, to be uncompromisingly severe in her condemnation of his behaviour; but between herself and her God, does she not often pour forth a torrent of self-reproach—her real or imaginary failure to do this, or to provide for that—as her love for her child drives her to assume all the blame for his misconduct? She loves him more than she loves herself: that is the explanation of her achievement; and because such love is rare, true forgiveness is rare,—the spurious needing to be recognized for what it is, for otherwise we shall remain content with our hypocrisy."

"There are some people", commented the Ancient, "who go through life collecting injuries and grievances, which they formally present to the Almighty before partaking of a Church Communion, presumably to convince Him of their fitness, but which they count against Him to the end, as sufferings unjustly inflicted yet nobly endured. It is a curious psychology, often accompanied by an intensity of personal feeling which, if turned inside out, and changed into sympathy and repentance, would become quite a valuable asset in the spiritual life, instead of an active, self-reproducing poison. Yet such people insist that they 'forgive.' There is a simple test by which forgiveness may be known. The mother, of whom the Philosopher was speaking, no doubt prayed passionately and with tears that God would forgive her son, even as she had forgiven him. (I am drawing my illustrations from the ways of the orthodox, and am purposely using their terms.) Now, to forgive an injury implies that someone has sinned against us. Question: do these habitual dispensers of forgiveness ardently pray that God (whatever they may mean by that term) will forgive the offender? Do they worry about the other person's supposed offence against God,—or only about the offence against themselves? I know what the answer ought to be. I know also that if a

student of Theosophy were to approach his Master (Christ or another) with the request, 'Please forgive so-and-so, who has treated me very badly', and were to persist,—he would be likely to discover, before his Master had finished with him, which of the two, himself or the offender, stood in greater need of forgiveness."

"Experience is a process of self-extermination", remarked the Student.

The Philosopher eyed him, as if to say, "Where from, young man?"

"Too concise to be unpremeditated?" laughed the Student. "Well, you're right. My words were coined many hundreds of years ago in China, by Tu Fu, though doubtless the same idea had been voiced from the dawn of the Manvantara."

"And who was Tu Fu, may I ask?" There was a note of suspicion in this.

"An entirely authentic person, I assure you", the Student answered. "He was a poet, and his poems have been translated recently by Edna Worthley Underwood and Chi Hwang Chu. I am immensely fond of Chinese poetry. It is such a rest from skyscrapers, and from the angularity of our civilization. Chinese poetry gives the sense of lovely and gently flowing curves. Its moral texture varies enormously, in the nature of things, seeing that it was representative both of the good and bad in an age-long culture. Some of it is distinctly Sybaritic; but much of it is extraordinarily wise, the fruit of generations of experience."

"Were there other questions arising out of the Convention?" the Recorder now asked.

"I received a letter", one of the group replied, "which suggests that entirely wrong inferences may have been drawn from something said at the Convention. The writer of it asked whether a Theosophist 'has or has not the right to enter into a revolution' in order to rid his country of a tyrant, when that tyrant has persecuted the members of your family. The question seemed to me to show a very considerable misunderstanding of Theosophy, and as some of our members live in countries where revolution is constantly preached, and frequently practised, it may be worth while to deal with the subject in the 'Screen.' In the first place, a member of The Theosophical Society is not necessarily a serious student of Theosophy. As a member, he is bound only to help, so far as he sees fit, 'to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity.' This, however, clearly implies a duty to his fellow-members. Suppose, for instance, that he lives in Mexico, and were a member of a Branch there: how could he conspire against the Government without prejudice to his fellows? Would not the Government infer, no matter how unreasonably, that the Society of which he is known to be a member, must in some way be 'tarred with the same brush'? Would he not inevitably bring suspicion upon his associates? Apart from that, if he would look more deeply into the principles of Theosophy, he would be led to look for the *cause* of the trouble in any one of the various Republics on the American continent. All of them were the 'children' of some European 'parent'; all of them rebelled; all of them have

inherited the Karma of rebellion. It has been said of the citizens of some of them that revolution is their national sport. At the time of the original rebellion—the rebellion that made them 'free'—it doubtless seemed that there was every justification for extreme measures. But actually and practically, intellectually and spiritually, would Mexico, for instance, be better or worse off, if she were a Spanish Colony with Alfonso as King? Children frequently rebel against their parents; to do so has become almost a custom in the United States; and sometimes they rebel for reasons which *seem* to be excellent, especially to friends of their own age. None the less, rebellion means that they are thinking of their rights to the exclusion of their duties. If they were capable of listening to advice, we should tell them so, and should urge them to wait. Wrongs, whether real or imaginary, usually are righted as the reward of patience. In any case, if the American Colonies had 'waited', instead of rebelling, I believe they would be better off to-day,—perhaps not so rich in a worldly sense, but far better off in terms of everything worth while.

"The Karma of revolution: what is gained by continuing the initial mistake? One revolution is piled on top of another; one 'tyrant' is disposed of only to make room for the next. It may be said: 'But we will put a good man in place of a bad.' Even so, in less than six months (the period varies in different Republics) there will be another revolution, organized by other people, to put a better or a worse man in the place of your choice; and if you do not throw the conspirators into prison, they will throw you there; and so on and on.

"I am not jeering at the South and Central American Republics. In this country we are not blessed with *a* tyrant; we have a Bureaucracy; also an Oligarchy; also a Congress. How they fix it up between them, we never know; but we have learned to tread softly, and to make friends with the Police.

"Many people in Russia wanted to get rid of their 'tyrants.' I can remember forty years ago the terrible stories of Siberian prisons, and of men and women sent there for political reasons. Well,—is Russia better or worse off, now that the Romanoffs are out of the way? Is China either happier or better, for being rid of the Manchus?

"Epictetus was a slave, but he was also a good Theosophist, and therefore was more free in fact than the vast majority of those who rejoice on the Fourth of July. Tyrants, as a rule, simply reflect, or epitomize, the 'mass' nature of the people over whom they tyrannize. They are a symptom, not the cause of the trouble. We need to be set free from ourselves, if we would gain political freedom. Meanwhile we should remember the saying of the Master Christ: Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's,—and that he held a penny in his hand as he said it: just that much and no more. The method suggested at the Convention, which is an inner method, and which is based upon self-conquest, is the only way to help the nations along the path that Masters wish them to follow,—the path of abundant life and of true freedom; the path that lifts men Godward."

"Will you allow me to change the subject rather violently?" asked our

Visitor. Then, turning to the Ancient, he said: "This may seem personal, but I should really like to know: do you go to Church?"

The Ancient laughed. "Why, yes", he said.

"And do you say the Creed?"

"I do"— evidently wondering what was coming next.

"But do you believe in the Virgin birth?"

"The answer to that must depend, I imagine, upon what you mean by those words."

"I mean that Christ had no father in the physical sense; and I simply don't believe it."

"Why should you?" inquired the Ancient.

"But that is what most people believe who say the Creed, isn't it?"

"I doubt if most people believe anything in particular", the Ancient answered. "They say the Creed from habit, with very open minds as to what it is all about. In any case, I see no reason why my understanding of it should be governed by 'most people.'"

"How about the clergy?"

"I have yet to meet two clergymen who agreed in their interpretation of the Creed, and even if I did, a third would be certain to disagree. Apart from that, however, it would never enter my mind to ask a clergyman to approve of my interpretation. I should not expect him to do so. He is not there for that purpose. He has troubles enough of his own."

"But does he not speak for his Church?"

"Not if there are other clergymen within earshot!"

"Priests in the confessional are supposed to speak for Christ."

"That", said the Ancient, "does not happen to be my denomination; if it were, I should try to make allowance for an occasional 'bad connection.'"

"But there were Church Councils, at which the doctrine of the Church was defined."

"There were", agreed the Ancient. "I was not present at them, so far as I know, and do not feel in the least responsible for what they did or said. Do you?"

Our Visitor let that pass. Then he said: "You have not yet told me if you believe in the Virgin birth."

"I believe in it", the Ancient answered; "but a mystic—which is what my friends call me—should never allow himself to state his beliefs in negative terms. I believe that the mother of Christ, prior to her marriage, had been a Temple Virgin. You are aware also, of course, that all the World Saviours, such as Buddha and many others, were said to have been born miraculously, of Virgins. The name of Buddha's mother was Maya,—the negative aspect of the Logos. The symbology is universal, both macro- and microcosmic. It is best, however, to work these things out for yourself, as meaning lies within meaning, and it is a mistake to stand still with a 'sufficient' explanation."

"It seems to me", said our Visitor, "that your method would make possible almost any interpretation of any creed."

"That is part of its charm", the Ancient smilingly assented. "Mystics believe in the religion of experience, checking their own—this is essential—in the light of the recorded experience of the past. It is exactly what a chemist does in his laboratory. Even a creed is a record in that sense—an attempt to express in condensed form the result of many experiments, both intellectual and spiritual. Show me the creed, and, with the help of Theosophy, the universal solvent, I will undertake to find in it, among other things, a history of the soul's pilgrimage, and, therefore, an outline of the drama of Initiation. No mystic has any trouble with a creed!"

Our Visitor's point-blank questioning of the Ancient about his personal beliefs, had evoked answers which, although in the main serious, were expressed rather quizzically, arousing in the Student a more mischievous mood. "Quotation", he began: " 'Over the shallows,———' "

The Recorder, suspicious, and not knowing what was coming next, interrupted him: "More of Tu Fu?"

"No", said the Student; "a little thing of my own, composed in dream; deeply significant I assure you."

So the Recorder turned quickly to the speaker at the Convention who has already been quoted, asking him, "Any afterthoughts?"

"Everyone who speaks at a Convention must have afterthoughts, I imagine, —wishing that he had expressed himself differently, or had remembered this or that at the time, instead of when it was too late. It happened in my case that I read the *Life of General Dyer*, by Ian Colvin, after instead of before the Convention, much to my regret. Dyer was the man who saved India from a second mutiny in 1919, by firing on a mob at Amritsar, and by killing several hundred natives. In 1916, Lloyd George had engineered the fall of Asquith. In order to detach Asquith's former adherents, Lloyd George offered the great office of Secretary of State for India, to Samuel Montagu, who had been Financial Secretary to the Treasury under Asquith. Montagu, a Jew of a very different type from Disraeli, accepted the position in 1917, and went to India during the cold weather of that year. He fraternized with all the rebels he could find, and soon brought India to such a pass that Indians who had previously been loyal to the Government found that the only way to gain favour was to attack it as violently as possible, after which they were invited to Simla, there to be deferentially consulted. Both Soviet Russia and Afghanistan did everything they could to take advantage of this, and to bring the trouble to a head, the result being that the brutal murder of white people was followed by serious uprisings, and by 'open rebellion' which would have spread throughout India if Dyer had not shown the necessary courage, firmness, and inherent respect for law and order. The point is, however, that because Montagu was a member of the Cabinet, his fellow-politicians, including Winston Spencer Churchill, decided to sacrifice Dyer regardless of truth, justice and honour. They did this as 'the easiest way out'. They were childish enough to imagine on the one hand, that the official 'decapitation' of Dyer would conciliate the irreconcilables in India, who of course had done every-

thing possible to make capital out of this latest exhibition of 'savage militarism'. They wanted, on the other hand, to spike the guns of the Labour Party, which was loud in its denunciation of Dyer, and insistent that the Cabinet was responsible for his action. So Dyer, instead of being promoted and rewarded, as he ought to have been, suffered the full weight of the Cabinet's displeasure, including that of the Secretary of State for War (Churchill), which, as the victim was a soldier, meant the end of his career. The whole incident shows how utterly lacking in principle these politicians are,—how morally as well as intellectually unfit to govern. It may be argued, of course, that it is not so much the men as the system that is at fault, and it cannot be denied that men who by nature are honest and upright, become tricky and slippery after a few years of dependence upon popular support and a majority vote. But who made the system if not these same men, of all parties indifferently, outbidding each other in their willingness to extend the system (the franchise) which many of them, in their hearts, must know to be rotten? The procedure of the Cabinet in the Dyer case is a revelation of 'government by conspiracy'—the sort of thing that goes on constantly in America and France as in England, and wherever the *vox populi* is recognized, in practice, as the *vox Dei*. How great indeed is the need for God-instructed men to rule the nations! What folly to expect peace so long as a mob can declare war! And what is Congress, or the House of Commons, or the French Chamber and Senate, but a huge committee appointed by a mob?"

"It is fortunate for Anglo-American relations", said the Historian, "that this country now owns and governs the Philippines. If it were not for that, the Indian agitators who lecture here would receive far more support than they do, not only from the anti-British element which is always with us, but from our huge population of sentimentalists, who know nothing of British India or its history, and who are ready at all times to believe any evil thing that is spoken of Governments other than their own.

"I, also, read Colvin's book, and wish it were more widely known. It is published by William Blackwood and Sons, of Edinburgh and London. Among other things it would give people a better understanding of Indian discontent. It cannot be too often repeated that India had been over-run by wave after wave of conquerors, for ages before the British arrived there; that, for the most part, each conqueror exploited the Indian people—including those of the preceding 'waves'—with ruthless vigour; that the British conquest was gradual and often peaceful; that while many disputed, the greater part of the population soon acquiesced in this gradual process which gave to India benefits she despaired of finding under the decadent descendants of other alien conquerors and princes, vassals and brigands, who defied the Mogul Dominion. To quote Colvin: 'As neither Muhammadans nor Hindus had ever been willing the one to tolerate the other, they inclined to accept a rule tolerant of both. The princes accepted treaties which confirmed them in their dignities and possessions; the brigands were either suppressed or driven into desert and mountain country, and the great mass of the people, the culti-

vators, rejoiced in their hearts to find rulers who gave them security in their lands and placed stern limits on the rapacity of those who had robbed and exploited them. . . . There was, however, always a minority which could not reconcile itself to the British system. The caste of Brahmin ministers and counsellors who had secured a monopoly of rule in many parts of the crumbling Mogul Empire; the tax collectors and the money-lenders who were checked at every turn by the new administration; the *vakils* and pleaders who served those moneyed interests in the courts of law, and found their cunning curbed by British justice—all these formed a party linked together in common opposition under the organization of the National Congress. It was one of the several mistakes of the British Government to establish a cheap system [any system, I should say] of Western education without any roots either in the native languages or literatures. Students, herded together at non-residential university colleges, were taught in an alien language a smattering of Occidental philosophies, and were turned out on a world which could offer them but little and poor employment to swell the hungry ranks of lawyers, journalists, and agitators. The main interest of this faction was to obtain more place and power in the ranks of the various Government services, and as their demands could not be granted without injury to every Indian interest, they were the fiercest critics of those who stood in their way, and behind and beneath all this mass of discontent were the secret organizations of anarchy and crime already noticed'—by the author, in an earlier section of his book.

"The facts speak for themselves: nearly half of British India consists of native States, governed autocratically by native Princes, subject only to the advice of British Residents. In these native States, there are practically no disorders, either political or religious. The Indian Princes are loyal to the British Crown, as their behaviour during the Great War completely demonstrated, for they gave not only lip-service, but all the resources in men and money they could scrape together. The trouble—and this includes the constant and murderous riots between Hindus and Muhammadans—the trouble is confined to those parts of India, such as Bengal and Bombay, in which some form of 'representative government' has been introduced as the result of a so-called 'liberal' policy, instigated or approved by British Secretaries of State in London, who have proceeded on the almost unthinkable double fallacy that what is best for a white man in Manchester (or New York), is necessarily best for a brown man in Calcutta. They have not sense enough even to see that they are repeating, in principle, the mistake of those whom many of them, like Morley and Montagu, would have scorned,—the narrow-minded missionary who assumes that the religion of Beth-El or Eben-Ezer Chapel is necessarily the best and only religion for the whole world. Heaven help them! I know nothing of their motives, but their blindness is answerable for more suffering and bloodshed than Cæsar in all his wars. You ask for God-instructed men; I should say that plain common sense would have saved us from most of our troubles."

"Perhaps", assented the Ancient; "but having got into them, it may require

more than common sense to get us out of them. Plain common sense in matters of hygiene and diet would sometimes—not always—ward off collapse of the digestive system; but once the organism itself has acquired vicious habits, it may need more than the knowledge of many doctors to restore the body to a state of health. In truth, a brand new body, at much expense, may be the only way out!"

"In that case", the Philosopher suggested dryly, "more need than ever for God-instructed men to supervise the transition."

"It was said at the Convention that we should 'evoke' such guidance", the Beginner interjected rather pleadingly, "and I have no least idea how to set about it. I do wish that something more might be said on that subject."

"What are you doing now", asked the Recorder, "if not using 'the power of evocation' on this group? I do not know with what success you will meet, but I will gladly add my small power to your own. I appeal to the Ancient on behalf of the Beginner."

The Ancient laughed. "Irresistible!" he said. "I only wish that I could answer the question as it deserves. The difficulty lies in the fact that the power is exercised on so many different planes, for a dog in one sense 'evokes' his supper by begging his master for it after the manner of dogs, while, with a power unimaginable to us, the Lords of Being evoke from the stillness of Pralaya the worlds and systems of worlds, the hierarchies of souls and the multitude of forms, which the next great period of efflorescence is intended to bring to perfection. How does the dog 'evoke' his supper? It seems to me that first he feels, and perhaps may be said to recognize his need; second, he imagines the taste of food, and desires that which he imagines; third, he believes (has faith) that his desire can and will be satisfied; fourth, this act of faith immensely increases his desire; fifth, his sense of need and his desire, his imagination and his faith, result in action: not being in a position to order, he begs,—which constitutes one of the differences, in some cases, between the dog and his master. Each of the earlier stages is essential to success, no matter on what plane the power of evocation be exercised. The final stage, that of action, varies in method as men vary in spiritual attainment. Most people can do no more than beg. This is the ordinary prayer of petition,—by no means to be despised, as we see from the experience of the dog. In the occult sense, however, this should not be included under the term, 'power of evocation', although I have done so to facilitate understanding. It is rather the 'power of appeal',—a real and great power, though inferior to the other. That other power was defined by H. P. B. as 'will prayer'; as 'rather an internal command than a petition', and is based upon faith in the power of the divine spirit within us,—that spirit or flame which is part of our Master's own life, and which necessarily, therefore, contains all that he is. By identifying yourself with that, in terms of will, for a purpose known to be his purpose, you establish contact between the inner world and the outer, and help to project into manifestation the condition which he desires. It is impossible, however, to do this, or even to offer a real petition, without first

using to the utmost the faculties and powers of which I have spoken: we must intensely feel and realize a need; we must clearly imagine its satisfaction; we must arouse by all means our faith that it will be satisfied; we must determine to make every conceivable though sane sacrifice—of sloth or of self-indulgence—as our contribution toward the attainment of our object, and to persist in our effort, interminably, if necessary, until our end be achieved. These are the essential *preliminaries*, both to successful prayer and to the still greater power of evocation. Take once more as illustration, the mother, praying, this time, by the sick-bed of her child: she covers every one of these preliminary stages in a flash, without effort,—unless, poor woman, she has failed in the past to cultivate faith, which cannot, like desire, spring to life in a moment. In any case she sends forth a petition that is real, and not perfunctory: she would lay down her life for that of her child; more than that, she will gladly, gratefully, make daily and hourly sacrifices for his recovery. She does not pray, and then go to a party as if her task were done. She *lives*—eats and sleeps and labours—solely for the fulfilment of her desire. Does not this explain what has been taught from the beginning of time by mystics: that one moment of prayer is sufficient if only time enough has been given to its preparation? For the mother's 'preparation' has been done for her, so to speak, by circumstances; we, as a rule, need to cover the corresponding ground by effort of will. This will make our petition, or our evocation, irresistible,—on condition that it be in accord with the divine purpose; and it requires very little faith to believe that the procedure advocated at the Convention is an expression of that purpose, conceived by the Lodge, and, for externalization, waiting only upon the volume of response from below, beginning with our response, as the body or organization closest in touch, exoterically, with the source of the world's Peace, and with the Will which alone can establish it."

T.

Never to tire, never to grow cold; to be patient, sympathetic, tender; to look for the budding flower and the opening heart; to hope always, like God; to love always—this is duty.—AMIEL.

A HINDU CHÊLA'S DIARY*

(Continued)

FROM *THE PATH*, VOL. I., NOS. 3, 4, 5, AND 6, JUNE TO SEPTEMBER, 1886.

"Thrusting my feet into my sandals, and catching up my turban, I hurried after him, afraid that the Master would get beyond me, and I remain unfortunate at losing some golden opportunity.

"He walked out into the jungle and turned into an unfrequented path. The jackals seemed to recede into the distance; now and then in the mango trees overhead, the flying foxes rustled here and there, while I could distinctly hear the singular creeping noise made by a startled snake as it drew itself hurriedly away over the leaves. Fear was not in my breast for Master was in front. He at last came to a spot that seemed bare of trees, and bending down, seemed to press his hand into the grass. I then saw that a trap door or entrance to a stairway, very curiously contrived, was there. Stairs went down into the earth. He went down and I could but follow. The door closed behind me, yet it was not dark. Plenty of light was there, but where it came from I cared not then, nor can I now, tell. It reminded me of our old weird tales told us in youth of pilgrims going down to the land of the Devas where, although no sun was seen, there was plenty of light.

"At the bottom of the stairs was a passage. Here I saw people, but they did not speak to me, and appeared not even to see me, although their eyes were directed at me. Kunâla said nothing, but walked on to the end, where there was a room in which were many men looking as grand as he does, but two, more awful, one of whom sat at the extreme end."

* * * * * * *

[Here there is a confused mass of symbols and ciphers which I confess I cannot make out, and even if I had the ability to do so, I would check myself,

---

Note.—"A Hindu Chêla's Diary" was reprinted in the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY of April and July, 1916; but as it is a classic in our literature, we reproduce it again for the benefit of those to whom the back numbers of the QUARTERLY may not be accessible.

All the footnotes are exactly as they appeared in *The Path;* and the signature [Ed.] with which some of them end, refers to the Editor of *The Path*, William Q. Judge.—EDITORS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY.

* The original MS. of this Diary as far as it goes is in our possession. The few introductory lines are by the friend who communicated the matter to us.—[Ed.]

because I surmise that it is his own way of jotting down for his own remembrance, what occurred in that room. Nor do I think that even a plain reading of it would give the sense to any one but the writer himself, for this reason, that it is, quite evidently, fragmentary. For instance, I find among the rest, a sort of notation of a division of states or planes: whether of consciousness, of animated, or of elemental life, I cannot tell; and in each division are hieroglyphs that might stand for animals, or denizens of the astral world, or for anything else—even for ideas only, so I will proceed at the place of his returning.]

"Once more I got out into the passage, but never to my knowledge went up those steps, and in a moment more was I again at my door. It was as I left it, and on the table I found the palm leaves as I dropped them, except that beside them was a note in Kunâla's hand, which read:

" 'Nilakant—strive not yet to think too deeply on those things you have just seen. Let the lessons sink deep into your heart, and they will have their own fruition. To-morrow I will see you.' . . . .

"What a very great blessing is mine to have had Kunâla's company for so many days even as we went to ———. Very rarely, however, he said a few words of encouragement and good advice as to how I should go on. He seems to leave me as to that, to pick my own way. This is right, I think, because otherwise one would never get any individual strength or power of discrimination. Happy were those moments, when alone at midnight, we then had conversation. How true I then found the words of the *Agroushada Parakshai* to be:

" 'Listen while the Sudra sleeps like the dog under his hut, while the Vaisya dreams of the treasures that he is hoarding up, while the Rajah sleeps among his women. This is the moment when just men, who are not under the dominion of their flesh, commence the study of the sciences.'[11]

"The midnight hour must have powers of a peculiar nature. And I learned yesterday from glancing into an Englishman's book, that even those semi-barbarians speak of that time as 'the witching hour', and it is told me that among them 'witching' means to have magic power. . . . .

"We stopped at the Rest House in B. ——— yesterday evening, but found it occupied and so we remained in the porch for the night. But once more I was to be blessed by another visit with Kunâla to some of his friends whom I revere and who will I hope bless me too.

"When everyone had quieted down he told me to go with him to the sea which was not far away. We walked for about three-quarters of an hour by the seashore, and then entered as if into the sea. At first a slight fear came into me, but I saw that a path seemed to be there, although water was all around us. He in front and I following, we went for about seven minutes, when we came to a small island; on it was a building and on top of that a triangular light. From the sea shore, the island would seem like an isolated spot covered all over by green bushes. There is only one entrance to go

[11] See *Agroushada Parakshai*, 2d book, 23d dialogue.—[Ed.]

inside. And no one can find it out unless the occupant wishes the seeker to find the way. On the island we had to go round about for some space before we came in front of the actual building. There is a little garden in front, and there was sitting another friend of Kunâla with the same expression of the eyes as he has. I also recognized him as one of those who was in the room underground. Kunâla seated himself and I stood before them. We stayed an hour and saw a portion of the place. How very pleasant it is! And inside he has a small room where he leaves his body when he himself moves about in other places. What a charming spot, and what a delightful smell of roses and various sorts of flowers! How I should wish to visit that place often. But I cannot indulge in such idle dreams, nor in that sort of covetousness. The master of the place put his blessing hand upon my head, and we went away back to the Rest House and to the morrow full of struggles and of encounters with men who do not see the light, nor hear the great voice of the future; who are bound up in sorrow because they are firmly attached to objects of sense. But all are my brothers and I must go on trying to do the Master's work, which is only in fact the work of the Real Self which is All in All.

"I have been going over that message I received just after returning from the underground room, about not thinking yet too deeply upon what I saw there, but to let the lessons sink deep into my heart. Can it be true—must it not indeed be true—that we have periods in our development when rest must be taken for the physical brain, in order to give it time, as a much less comprehensive machine than these English college professors say it is, to assimilate what it has received, while at the same time the real brain—as we might say, the spiritual brain—is carrying on as busily as ever all the trains of thought cut off from the head. Of course this is contrary to this modern science we hear so much of now, as about to be introduced into all Asia, but it is perfectly consistent for me.

"To reconsider the situation: I went with Kunâla to this underground place, and there saw and heard most instructive and solemn things. I return to my room, and begin to puzzle over them all, to revolve and re-revolve them in my mind, with a view to clearing all up, and finding out what all may mean. But I am interrupted by a note from Kunâla directing me to stop this puzzling, and to let all I saw sink deep into my heart. Every word of his I regard with respect, and consider to hold a meaning, being never used by him with carelessness. So when he says, to let it sink into my 'heart', in the very same sentence where he refers to my thinking part—the mind—why he must mean to separate my heart from my mind and to give to the heart a larger and greater power.

"Well, I obeyed the injunction, made myself, as far as I could, forget what I saw and what puzzled me, and thought of other things. Presently, after a few days, while one afternoon thinking over an episode related in the *Vishnu Purana*,[12] I happened to look up at an old house I was passing, and stopped to

[12] An ancient Hindu book full of tales as well as doctrines.—[Ed.]

examine a curious device on the porch; as I did this, it seemed as if either the device, or the house, or the circumstance itself, small as it was, opened up at once several avenues of thought about the underground room, made them all clear, showed me the conclusion as vividly as a well demonstrated and fully illustrated proposition, to my intense delight. Now could I perceive with plainness, that those few days which seemed perhaps wasted, because withdrawn from contemplation of that scene and its lessons, had been, with great advantage, used by the spiritual man in unravelling the tangled skein, while the much praised brain had remained in idleness. All at once the *flash* came and with it knowledge.[13] But I must not depend upon these flashes, I must give the brain and its governor, the material to work with. . . . .

"Last night just as I was about to go to rest, the voice of Kunâla called me from outside and there I went at once. Looking steadily at me he said: 'We want to see you', and as he spoke he gradually changed, or disappeared, or was absorbed, into the form of another man with awe-inspiring face and eyes, whose form apparently rose up from the material of Kunâla's body. At the same moment two others stood there also, dressed in the Tibetan costume; and one of them went into my room from which I had emerged. After saluting them reverently, and not knowing their object, I said to the greatest,

" 'Have you any orders to give?'

" 'If there are any, they will be told you without being asked for,' he replied, 'stand still where you are.'

"Then he began to look at me fixedly. I felt a very pleasant sensation as if I were getting out of my body. I cannot tell now what time passed between that, and what I am now to put down here. But I saw I was in a peculiar place. It was the upper end of ——— at the foot of the ——— range. Here was a place where there were only two houses just opposite each other, and no other sign of habitation; from one of these came out the old faquir I saw at the Durga festival, but how changed, and yet the same: then so old, so repulsive; now so young, so glorious, so beautiful. He smiled upon me benignly and said:

" 'Never expect to see any one, but always be ready to answer if they speak to you; it is not wise to peer outside of yourself for the great followers of Vasudeva: look rather within.'

"The very words of the poor faquir!

"He then directed me to follow him.

"After going a short distance of about half a mile or so, we came to a natural subterranean passage which is under the ——— range. The path is very dangerous; the River ——— flows underneath in all the fury of pent-up waters, and a natural causeway exists upon which you may pass; only one person at a time can go there, and one false step seals the fate of the traveller.

[13] These *flashes* of thought are not unknown even in the scientific world, as when, in such a moment of lucidity, it was revealed to an English scientist, that there must be iron in the sun; and Edison gets his ideas thus.—[Ed.]

Besides this causeway, there are several valleys to be crossed. After walking a considerable distance through this subterranean passage we came into an open plain in L. ——— K. There stands a large massive building thousands of years old. In front of it is a huge Egyptian Tau. The building rests on seven big pillars, each in the form of a pyramid. The entrance gate has a large triangular arch, and inside are various apartments. The building is so large that I think it can easily contain twenty thousand people. Some of the rooms were shown to me.

"This must be the central place for all those belonging to the ——— class, to go for initiation and stay the requisite period.

"Then we entered the great hall with my guide in front. He was youthful in form but in his eyes was the glance of ages. . . . . The grandeur and serenity of this place strikes the heart with awe. In the centre was what we should call an altar, but it must only be the place where focuses all the power, the intention, the knowledge and the influence of the assembly. For the seat, or place, or throne, occupied by the chief ——— the highest ——— has around it an indescribable glory, consisting of an effulgence which seemed to radiate from the one who occupied it. The surroundings of the throne were not gorgeous, nor was the spot itself in any way decorated—all the added magnificence was due altogether to the aura which emanated from him sitting there. And over his head, I thought I saw as I stood there, three golden triangles in the air above—Yes, they were there, and seemed to glow with an unearthly brilliance that betokened their inspired origin. But neither they, nor the light pervading the place, were produced by any mechanical means. As I looked about me I saw that others had a triangle, some two, and all with that peculiar brilliant light."

[Here again occurs a mass of symbols. It is apparent that just at this spot he desires to jot down the points of the initiation which he wished to remember. And I have to admit that I am not competent to elucidate their meaning. That must be left to our intuitions, and possibly future experience.]

* * * * * * *

"Fourteenth day of the new moon. The events of the night in the hall of initiation gave me much concern. Was it a dream? Am I self-deluded? Can it be that I imagined all this? Such were the unworthy questions which flew behind each other across my mind for days after. Kunâla does not refer to the subject, and I cannot put the question. Nor will I. I am determined that, come what will, the solution must be reached by me, or given me voluntarily.

"Of what use to me will the teachings and all the symbols be, if I cannot rise to that plane of penetrating knowledge, by which I shall myself, by myself, be able to solve this riddle, and to discriminate the true, from the false and the illusory? If I am unable to cut asunder these questioning doubts, these bonds of ignorance, it is proof that not yet have I risen to the

plane situated above these doubts. . . . . Last night, after all day chasing through my mental sky these swift destroyers of stability—mental birds of passage—I lay down upon the bed, and as I did so, into my hearing fell these words:

" 'Anxiety is the foe of knowledge; like unto a veil it falls down before the soul's eye; entertain it, and the veil only thicker grows; cast it out, and the sun of truth may dissipate the cloudy veil.'

"Admitting that truth, I determined to prohibit all anxiety. Well I knew that the prohibition issued from the depths of my heart, for that was Master's voice; and confidence in his wisdom, the commanding nature of the words themselves, compelled me to complete reliance on the instruction. No sooner was the resolution formed, than down upon my face fell something which I seized at once in my hand. Lighting a lamp, before me was a note in the well-known writing. Opening it, I read:

" 'Nilakant. It was no dream. All was real; and more, that by your waking consciousness could not be retained, happened there. Reflect upon it all as reality, and from the slightest circumstance draw whatever lesson, whatever amount of knowledge, you can. Never forget that your spiritual progress goes on quite often to yourself unknown. Two out of many hindrances to memory, are anxiety and selfishness. Anxiety is a barrier constructed of harsh and bitter materials. Selfishness is a fiery darkness that will burn up the memory's matrix. Bring, then, to bear upon this other memory of yours, the peaceful stillness of contentment and the vivifying rain of benevolence.' "[14]

[I leave out here, as well as in other places, mere notes of journeys and various small matters, very probably of no interest.]

"In last month's passage across the hills near V———, I was irresistibly drawn to examine a deserted building, which I at first took for a grain holder, or something like that. It was of stone, square, with no openings, no windows, no door. From what could be seen outside, it might have been the ruins of a strong, stone foundation for some old building, gateway or tower. Kunâla stood not far off and looked over it, and later on he asked me for my ideas about the place. All I could say was, that although it seemed to be solid, I was thinking that perhaps it might be hollow.

" 'Yes,' said he, 'it is hollow. It is one of the places once made by Yogees to use for deep trance. If used by a chêla (a disciple) his teacher kept watch over it so that no one might intrude. But when an Adept wants to use it for laying his body away, while he travels about in his real, though perhaps to some unseen, form, other means of protection were often taken, which

[14] The careful student will remember that Jacob Boehme speaks of the "harsh and bitter anguish of nature which is the principle that produces bones and all corporification." So here the Master, it appears, tells the fortunate chêla, that in the spiritual and mental world, anxiety, harsh and bitter, raises a veil before us and prevents us from using our memory. He refers, it would seem, to the other memory above the ordinary. The correctness and value of what was said in this, must be admitted when we reflect that, after all, the whole process of development is the process of *getting back the memory of the past.* And that too is the teaching found in pure Buddhism as well as in its corrupted form.—[Ed.]

were just as secure as the presence of the teacher of the disciple.'

"Well,' I said, 'it must be that just now no one's body is inside there.'

" 'Do not reach that conclusion, nor the other either. It may be occupied and it may not'.

"Then we journeyed on, while he told me of the benevolence, not only of Brahmin Yogees, but also of Buddhist. No differences can be observed by the true disciple in any other disciple who is perhaps of a different faith. All pursue truth. Roads differ, but the goal of all remains alike."

. . . . "Repeated three times: 'Time ripens and dissolves all beings in the Great Self, but he who knows into what time itself is dissolved, he is the knower of the Veda.'

"What is to be understood, not only by this, but also by its being three times repeated?

"There were three shrines there. Over the door was a picture which I saw a moment, and which for a moment seemed to blaze out with light like fire. Fixed upon my mind, its outlines grew, then disappeared when I had passed the threshold. Inside, again its image came before my eyes. Seeming to allure me, it faded out, and then again returned. It remained impressed upon me, seemed imbued with life and intention to present itself for my criticism. When I began to analyze it, it would fade, and then when I was fearful of not doing my duty, or of being disrespectful to those beings, it returned as if to demand attention. Its description:

"A human heart that has at its centre a small spark—the spark expands and the heart disappears—while a deep pulsation seems to pass through me. At once identity is confused, I grasp at myself; and again the heart reappears with the spark increased to a large fiery space. Once more that deep movement; then sounds (7); they fade. All this in a picture? Yes! for in that picture there is life; there might be intelligence. It is similar to that picture I saw in Tibet on my first journey, where the living moon rises and passes across the view. Where was I? No, not afterwards! It was in the hall. Again that all pervading sound. It seems to bear me like a river. Then it ceased,—a soundless sound. Then once more the picture; here is Pranava.[15] But between the heart and the Pranava is a mighty bow with arrows ready, and tightly strung for use. Next is a shrine, with the Pranava over it, shut fast, no key and no keyhole. On its sides emblems of human passions. The door of the shrine opens and I think within I shall see the truth. No! another door? a shrine again. It opens too, and then another, brightly flashing, is seen there. Like the heart, it makes itself one with me. Irresistible desire to approach it comes within me, and it absorbs the whole picture.

" 'Break through the shrine of Brahman; use the doctrine of the teacher.' "[16]

---

[15] The mystic syllable OM.—[Ed.]

[16] There is some reference here apparently to the Upanishads, for they contain a teacher's directions to break through all shrines until the last one is reached.—[Ed.]

[There is no connection here of this exhortation with any person, and very probably it is something that was said either by himself, in soliloquy, or by some voice or person to him.

I must end here, as I find great rents and spaces in the notes. He must have ceased to put down further things he saw or did in his real inner life, and you will very surely agree, that if he had progressed by that time to what the last portions would indicate, he could not set down his reflections thereon, nor any memorandum of facts. We, however, can never tell what was his reason. He might have been told not to do so, or might have lacked the opportunity.

There was much all through these pages that related to his daily, family life, not of concern to you; records of conversations; worldly affairs; items of money, and regarding appointments, journeys and meetings with friends. But they show of course that he was all this time living through his set work with men, and often harassed by care, as well as comforted by his family and regardful of them. All of that I left out, because I supposed that while it would probably interest you, yet I was left with discretion to give only what seemed to relate to the period marked at its beginning, by his meetings with M———, and, at the end, by this last remarkable scene, the details of which we can only imagine. And likewise were, of necessity, omitted very much that is sufficiently unintelligible in its symbolism to be secure from revelation. Honestly have I tried to unlock the doors of the ciphers, for no prohibition came with their possession, but all that I could refine from its enfolding obscurity is given to you.

As he would say, let us salute each other and the last shrine of Brahman; *Om, hari, Om!*

Trans.]

Do your little duties which most men make light of, with great exactness; for if you will faithfully do your lesser duties, your greater duties will take care of themselves.—MANNING.

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Morning Session

The Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society was called to order at 10.30 A.M. on Saturday, April 27th, 1929, at 64 Washington Mews, New York, by the Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. Charles Johnston. Temporary organization was effected by the election of Mr. Johnston as Temporary Chairman of the Convention, and Miss Julia Chickering as Temporary Secretary. The first business of the Convention being to determine what Branches of the Society were duly represented, either by delegates or proxies, it was moved and seconded that the Chair appoint a Committee on Credentials, with instructions to report as soon as practicable. The Committee appointed was: Mr. Henry Bedinger Mitchell, Treasurer T.S.; Miss Isabel E. Perkins, Secretary T.S.; Mr. K. D. Perkins, Chairman of the New York Branch.

Address of the Temporary Chairman

MR. JOHNSTON: While the Committee on Credentials is at work, it is the very great privilege of the Temporary Chairman to welcome the delegates on behalf of the whole Society. That welcome, as you know, is from the heart. It is sincere, and it is stronger and more earnest year by year as the years pass.

As we passed our fiftieth anniversary some time ago, and we see that special cyclic period receding, there may be some inclination to say, "Well, we have now passed that danger point, let us rest on our oars a while." No course could be more hazardous. It is essential that we put in our best work, and something more than our best work, every day of the theosophical year before we reach the next starting point.

There are delegates from many Branches, but this Convention is, in a sense, signalized by the new recruits,—those whose membership is counted not in weeks or months, but in days; so something may well be said about the conditions of service. One takes for granted that these new members have joined The Theosophical Society not for what they can receive, but for what they can give. It was said not long ago that there was never a period in the history of mankind when so many people rose punctually each morning to do a day's work. We must rise each theosophical day as Theosophists; we must determine to do a good day's work in the spirit of Theosophy, not *some* days, but every day, not *some* hours, but every hour. Only by untiring effort, never discouraged, knowing no relaxation, can we complete the task set before us. There is a verse which has been quoted before to Theosophists, and which, therefore, there is a very sound warrant for quoting now to Theosophists,—Christina Rossetti's verse:

Does the road wind uphill all the way?
  Yes, to the very end.
Will the day's journey take the whole long day?
  From morn to night, my friend.

To carry on the thought of that poem: when those young recruits do reach one goal of the journey and are ready to knock at the celestial gate, again a line from the poem—"They will not keep you waiting at that door": the gate will open.

I think the Committee on Credentials is ready to report, but I beg you to keep in mind that the journey will last the whole long day, and be ready beforehand for the sustained effort which it will need.

Report of the Committee on Credentials

Mr. H. B. Mitchell: The Committee on Credentials beg to submit the following report: they have examined the credentials submitted, and find represented here, by delegate or by proxy, eighteen branches, entitled to cast one hundred and ten votes. Seven different countries are represented:

Aussig, Aussig, Czecho-Slovakia
Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio
Dana, Arvika, Sweden
Gateshead, Gateshead, England
Hope, Providence, R. I.
Jehoshua, Sanfernando, Venezuela
Middletown, Middletown, Ohio
Newcastle, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England
New York, New York, N. Y.
Norfolk, Norfolk, England
Oslo, Oslo, Norway
Pacific, Los Angeles, California
Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
South Shields, South Shields, England
Toronto, Toronto, Canada
Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela
Virya, Denver, Colorado
Whitley Bay, Whitley Bay, England

It was moved, seconded and voted that the Report of the Committee on Credentials be accepted, and that the Committee be discharged with thanks.

The permanent organization of the Convention being the next business, Mr. H. B. Mitchell, President of the New York Branch, was nominated and duly elected as Permanent Chairman, and took the Chair.

Address of the Permanent Chairman

The Chairman: To those who see outer events as the reflection of the inner movement of the spirit, it would be strange indeed if the opening note of our Convention were not that of gladness and gratitude. Those were the feelings uppermost in our hearts as we came here this morning and welcomed old friends and comrades, and looked forward to the opportunity, accorded us to-day, of giving our best to the service of the Cause that we love. Mr. Johnston has already spoken of the accession of new members who have come to us during the year, and has spoken, too, of the fact that they are drawn to us not for what they may receive—at least not primarily for that—but in order to give. Yet I hope that what they may receive also draws them. I, who have received so much, would wish all others to seek an even greater measure; for there is no limit to what is offered. The only limit is what we ourselves impose upon our capacity to receive. I doubt if the two motives, the desire to give and the desire to receive, can ever be wholly divorced. In any spiritual undertaking, they are, and must be, but different facets of one and the same motive; for in the things of the spirit the distinction between them disappears. We receive from the Movement as we give to it; and more than that, we give to the Movement as we receive from it. The Theosophical Society has something to offer to all, and all can serve it. Does it seem strange that those who only seek to take, if they honestly use what they take, are those who also give? If the gift were a physical one, if it were a thing of the outer world, where to give means that one no longer has, where to use means to lessen, the paradox would indeed be a contradiction; but in the spiritual world quite the reverse is true. "As one lamp lights another nor grows less, so nobleness enkindleth nobleness." As we take of nobility, nobility is increased. As we take of any spiritual value, to the extent that we respond to it, to that extent we increase it. It is a flame which grows as it is given fuel; spreads

as it is imparted to others. All that receives it, augments it. It is so in the Society. The more any member can take of what it offers, the more he gives,—provided only that he is sincere, so that, having taken anything as his own, he is thereafter true to it, true to his own truth. The motto of the Society stands there as a beacon-light to show us this. "There is no religion higher than truth." Truth: we seek it, we take it, each in our own measure and in our own kind. The truth of one is not and cannot be the same as the truth of another,—nor can the duty and responsibility that that truth entails. Neither the gifts received from the Society, nor the services rendered to the Society, can be the same for different members. Each must take for himself, must give for himself; and that which he receives and gives is alike unique. But he gives as he is true to the truth that he finds.

Theosophy, as we have said again and again, is not an intellectual dogma, nor a collection of dogmas. It is not, where we can know it, a single thing; for its unity transcends the mind's reach. It is that universal Divine Wisdom, the wisdom of the divine world, which is synonymous with Truth, and so shuts out nothing that is true. In whatever of truth anyone can find here, he is finding Theosophy; and when he is true to that fragment which he finds, to that extent he is true to Theosophy. Therefore to serve we must learn to take, and to take we must learn to serve; for if we do not put into practice the truths we perceive, we never can hold them. Only by living them can we make them our own and build them into the fabric of our being.

If this be understood, what I wish further to say will not be misunderstood. It will be clear that I am in no way forgetting our free and open platform, nor the fact that we recognize that the duty of one is not the duty of another.

Our open platform is an *open* platform, not an *empty* platform. It is open, so that all can bring to it their gifts of truth; but because of the gifts thus made to it, it is more than an open platform,—it is an open treasure-house, and the richness of the treasure it contains is beyond all estimate. Whatsoever a man may seek of the Spirit, he may find here; for here is the open door to the stored spiritual wisdom of mankind, the harvest of the spiritual experience of the human race. Those of us who have been longest in the Society and have received most from it, have the most overwhelming reason to believe the statement of its founders,—that its open platform was established at the bidding of the great Masters of Wisdom, and that these Masters laid upon it, as their contribution, the teachings of Theosophy. Once again I must point out that membership in the Society implies no obligation to accept this belief of its origin, nor to accept the teachings of Theosophy. Every member is free to believe or disbelieve as he will; but the Society is here, and Theosophy is here; and those who founded the one, brought to it the other. As they asked for the truths of others, so they gave of their own. They laid on that open platform the treasure of Theosophy, the restatement of the teaching of that "small old path that leads to the Eternal". They rephrased that teaching, for us, in terms that we, of our own time, could understand, and showed us how, once clearly seen, it could be recognized at the heart of all religions.

Many others have made other gifts. Were this not so, were the giving not continuous, the Society must long since have passed away. Each of us brings his own gift,—his view of truth, and what he is, be it wise or be it foolish. Here we find the gifts the world has given,—and they have been great: the world's experience, the world's knowledge; its latest scientific theories and fashions; its fads and fancies and common sense; its criticisms, sound and unsound; its unstable oscillations between hostility and respect; but here, above all, is the contribution from the great Lodge of Masters, and it is this which has made our Society, and makes it to-day, unique. We can find other open platforms,—or at least what are alleged to be such. We can find hundreds of societies where philosophy and science are brought together and discussed; and thousands of churches where theology is rephrased and reinterpreted in the most modern of modern terms. There are endless facilities offered to earnest students—whether in religion, philosophy or science—to aid them to gratify their curiosity or interest, and which they may use to learn of other beliefs or to penetrate more deeply into their own; but only in our own Society do we find, clearly ringing, the ancient note that has been struck anew,—the teaching of the ancient wisdom that leads to immortal life. Nowhere else is there the same clear

recognition, the same sure knowledge of the crowning fact of evolution,—the existence of the great Lodge of Masters, and of the spiritual hierarchy that stretches without break from man to the Supreme.

If the Society is to continue to be in the future what it has been in the past, if we are to be true to the responsibility with which we are entrusted and which we have met here to-day to try to fulfil, we must keep alive this gift which the Masters originally gave to us: the knowledge of their existence, of their teaching, and of the Path that leads to them. Such knowledge can live only as it is lived. This is not a service, therefore, that we can expect all members to be willing, or able, to give. It cannot be rendered by the visitors whose curiosity draws them within our doors, though they render us other services that we have learned to value greatly. It is a gift that can be made only by a certain class of members: and so I want to speak to that class: to those who are already disciples of the Masters' teaching, and who are striving to become, and to be, their personal chêlas. As in all of our Branch meetings, and in the pages of the QUARTERLY, we strive to meet the general need, and to talk the language of those whom we address, so perhaps it is fitting that at this one meeting of the year, when we come together to consider the best interests of the Cause we love, I should speak my own language and address myself directly to a certain class of my comrades. I feel it is the more fitting, since, if by any means this special class may be aided to fulfil the function that it alone can fulfil, then all other members will be aided too; for through the special contribution that only the few can make, the contributions of the many are quickened and vitalized, and become far more valuable and effective than they could otherwise be. I ask permission, therefore, to speak directly—and, in a certain sense, exclusively—to those who recognize themselves not only as students, but as disciples, of Theosophy, and who are aspiring to be more,—striving to follow the Path which Theosophy points out, and so to turn their faith into knowledge, reaching to communion with, and the service of, the great Lodge of Masters. Ultimately, the success or failure of any movement depends upon the success or failure of its disciples; so ultimately it must rest upon these to carry forward the life of our Movement, and to preserve the Society in the future as it has been in the past.

I think that even the newest member, even the most superficial student of Theosophy, will have recognized that what has drawn and helped him most is the presence here, within our Movement, of first-hand knowledge of spiritual things, of spiritual truth and life. It is not mere theory that he finds; not mere mental speculation, nor even the mere repetition of what we have been taught. There is in the Society a verified faith, a teaching that has been proved through personal experience, and so passed from faith to first-hand knowledge. It is this which has been the strength and real life of the Movement from its inception. No one could come in contact with H. P. B. or Judge without feeling that they spoke as those "having authority", who knew whereof they spoke. And from that time to this, such first-hand knowledge of the inner life has lived among us. It is this fact which constituted, in reality, the survival of the Movement over the turn of the cycle. In past centuries that knowledge has passed from the midst of the world with the close of the first twenty-five-year cycle in which it was given and gained. Here, we know that it did not, but that, remaining within The Theosophical Society, there remained within the world first-hand knowledge of the Lodge of Masters and of their work for men; and all our faith and aspiration have been quickened and sustained by it. We have been helped as first-hand knowledge always helps, helped more than we recognize or realize.

For twenty-nine years we have had that knowledge in our midst through a cyclic period when, in the past, the world has never had it. We have had twenty-nine years of such support as we were really not entitled to. The doorway has been kept open for us so much longer than we could have expected, that we must perforce look forward and ask ourselves how it will be with us when it closes; or how we ourselves may learn to do what has so far been done for us, and, gaining first-hand knowledge of our own, hold the door still open, both for ourselves and for those who come after us. For though the Theosophical Movement is itself eternal, though it moves from generation to generation, from century to century, through the whole of human history, in such a sweep that the hundred year cycle, with which we are now concerned, is seen

as but a day and a night in eternity,—it can manifest and act in the outer world only as there are those, in that world, who respond to it; and the human elements, which thus enter into it and carry it forward here, are not eternal. Their true life, yes, is eternal—the life of the soul and of the spirit; but incarnation comes and goes. Their presence with us in the outer world cannot be continuous, and the period between birth and death is brief. In the ocean waves, that troop in endless sequence from horizon to horizon, each drop of water can move but a little way, its part fulfilled if it pass on its motion to another. Therefore the knowledge which was given in the beginning, and which has quickened and deepened as the Movement progressed, that first-hand knowledge which we have always had amongst us, can only remain ours as it is gained by those who have not yet gained it. Those who now have it, who gained and have held it through these years, cannot remain with us always. They must pass on. Then, we ask ourselves, how will it be with us? and the answer must depend upon the success or failure of that special class of members, whom I directly address, who are now aspiring to discipleship and putting their faith to the test of action, that it may be transmuted into knowledge. There is no reason whatsoever why all who so aspire should not gain the knowledge that they seek, provided only that their aspiration be whole-hearted and complete in its self-giving, holding nothing back; not haggling over the price that must be paid in self-surrender, but eagerly offering all. There is no reason whatsoever why the Society should not continue to have what it has always had; nor why, having gone so far, it should not go all the way until the new outgiving from the Lodge. It is possible. Knowledge exists and is obtainable. Discipleship is a present-day possibility and fact. Nothing less than its full attainment should be our aim. Nothing less can meet the need. It may be that we shall fail. It may be that those who have reached that goal may die before we reach it; but let us not fail by reason of not trying,—by setting our aim too low.

I speak to those who seek knowledge; not to those who have it: and in seeking it, I ask that you should remember that it is there, that it is attainable. I ask that you should hold your faith firm that it is there, to be gained, and to be gained by you. Believe in it; and have the courage and the firmness to act upon your belief. It was by such faith as this that it was first gained by our predecessors. It is by such faith that it can now be gained by us; for such faith invokes knowledge, invokes power and invokes life.

We do not always recognize that our finite, human life, lived between the infinitudes that lie above and below, lives solely as it draws from these. These upper and nether worlds are symbolized for us in the constellations of the heavens and in the atoms of matter,—in the infinitely great and in the infinitely small. Each of these worlds is self-moving. In each is the law of radiant self-giving, radiant activity. But in the finite world between, the world of inert, material bodies, there is another and different law—the law of inertia—which expresses the fact that such bodies change their state of rest or motion, not of themselves, but only as they are acted upon by external forces. It is the difference between a dead and a living thing; and as we look honestly at our personal lives, we see how large a part of them obeys the law of death rather than of life. There is only one way to change this, and that is to evoke, from what is living, the power to quicken what is dead. We must evoke, from the radiant infinitudes above us, the life that will enable us really to live. We must open ourselves to it, and draw it into us, incarnating it in thought and act and being, so that it becomes our own, and we, too, become self-moving and self-radiant in the radiance of the spirit. We have that power of evocation and invocation, for it is the power of faith,—faith firmly held and lived. We do not know what the future may hold for us, nor whether our faith may always have the support that the presence of knowledge beside it, lends. If that support be withdrawn, our task must be harder; but, even so, it is wholly possible for us to do what our predecessors did, and, in doing, showed us how to do. In spite of darkness and denial, in spite of weakness and ignorance, through trial and struggle, we can hold fast to the faith that is ours, and, basing our lives upon it, invoke its realization, and so transform it into knowledge.

Looking forward to the future, and thinking of what must be required for the wise guidance of the Society, it seems to me that there may be no more important qualification for success than that we should learn to distinguish clearly between that in which we have faith and that of

which we have knowledge; for though, as I have been insisting, faith brings knowledge if we be true to it, it is not itself knowledge. Only as the distinction between what we know and what we believe, is held clear in our own minds, shall we be able to exercise either of the two great powers that we need to exercise: the power of knowledge and the power of faith. If we become confused here, the confusion will spread to all our thinking and to all we do; and, in misleading ourselves, we must run grave risk of misleading others, passing on to them, instead of the truth with which we have been entrusted, such half-truths as may be the worst of lies. On the one hand, if we begin to think we know, where we do not know, the transforming power, which we now believe true knowledge should bring, will not be verified in our experience, and little by little we shall lose our faith in it. We shall cease to search for what we believe we have; cease to struggle upward, if we think we are already on the heights. We shall thus constantly be tempted to lower our ideal and to lose our faith in the existence of what lies beyond. We shall be tempted to think that the intuitions, the flashes of light and inspiration, of insight and guidance, which come to all of us upon our road, are the goal of the road itself,—the pure, unflickering flame of wisdom, rising from the first-hand knowledge we are striving to attain. On the other hand, if we confuse faith and knowledge, we are more than likely to lose sight and hold of what we do actually know, and so not make the use of it that we should, but be like men who starve, forgetful of the emergency ration they carry with them.

Hold the ideal of chêlaship high. The very greatest heights to which our imaginations can rise are lower than the reality, less than the truth. There is possible a face-to-face communion, a direct knowledge, a close and clear and conscious sharing of life, of thought and feeling, of will and purpose, between man, the servant and the son, and his Master, his lord and his father, that is greater than any we can conceive; for it transcends in intimacy and closeness all those human relationships by which we seek to illustrate it, and that are all we have by which to guide our conceptions. Believe this; and never let your ideals sink beneath it. Never be content with any lower aim, nor rest in any lesser goal. Press on to that, to the highest you can conceive.

But on the other hand, knowing that you have not gained this goal, recognize what you have gained,—what you have and already are. We have received great gifts. Do not let us forget and neglect them, and thus render them impotent, in our search for something higher; for that higher is, in truth, contained in what we already have, and only as we recognize and learn to use what we have, can it develop into what we seek. We must treasure and cultivate the seed, if it is to grow into the tree.

Think for a moment,—we, who aspire to chêlaship, who crave to serve, who believe in Theosophy, let us think what we have. We know that there have come to us tidings of the existence of the Masters. We know that we have heard teaching which is said to have come from them. We know that this teaching has given us a view of our own life which is wholly different from the view of the world; that we do not look upon ourselves as limited by a single span between birth and death, but think of ourselves as having shared, through incarnation after incarnation, in the whole history of the human race, slowly growing toward that stature that man is destined to attain. There is no one of us who does not recognize at least something of the profound change that has thus been wrought in him; and this recognition is not a matter of hearsay or of faith; it is first-hand knowledge and direct experience. We are, and we know ourselves to be, other than we were. More than this, having heard of the existence of the Masters, having heard what we believe to be at least an echo of their teaching, and having experienced something of its transforming power, we have found our hearts drawn to them with a passionate, homesick craving, such as some lonely children may feel for their parents and their home. We have felt that the Masters' Cause was our Cause, and that the purpose and meaning of our life lay in loyalty to it and to them. Perhaps we do not know them. It may be only faith that tells us of the existence of what we crave. But we do know that we crave to know them, crave, here and now, and with all we are, to serve them. Our craving is not a matter of faith; it is a matter of knowledge; and of all the knowledge which we have, it is, perhaps, the most important. Let us never forget or overlay it. For it is the will to serve that makes a man a servant and a friend. Those serve who wish to serve; those are servants who so regard

certain aspects very crudely materialistic. I was reading the other day a discussion of Christianity in one of the best known scientific periodicals; and the conclusion was that Christianity is not only worthless but dangerous, because it is anti-biological. Christianity teaches among other things that we must aspire and must check the unbridled laxity of our lower natures. It is a religion of purity and asceticism, and purity and asceticism are anti-biological. They teach this openly and without disguise, and this is what is being taught in our colleges. They say to classes in biology, "Please park your soul outside the door; by no means check the impulses of your lower nature." The truth is that the lower nature of the human being is the most morbid thing in the whole field of biology, and what it needs, as a beginning, is to be trimmed down to biological truth.

That is really the problem that we, that Theosophy has to face. There is only one cure, and that is that we should really master theosophical science. Its presence in our hearts and minds, and its presence in the world, in virtue of the potency of spiritual law, will act as an antiseptic to this dangerous teaching. We must not be content with a devotional Theosophy alone, not with a Theosophy of the heart alone. These things are indispensable and we cannot live without them, but of themselves they are not enough. We need now, more than ever, theosophical science, a thorough mastery from the beginning, of the science of Theosophy; because the danger now is, not from theology, but from science, and no cure will serve but theosophical science.

So I would simply add to what our Chairman has been saying: let us among other things direct our effort in the definite channel, really to exercise our powers (and for the most part, we underestimate our powers), and let us make a resolute effort to conquer what is called in Sanskrit, *laziness*. We must use our intellects to master the science of Theosophy, so that it will gleam and glow in us, and in the inner lining of this outer world, forming a beacon light in this "scientific" age. This is what I can contribute and I hope my colleagues will generously supplement it.

Mr. Hargrove was then asked, as a member of the Executive Committee, to add to the report of its Chairman.

Mr. Hargrove: Mr. Chairman and Fellow-members: Both as an individual member and on behalf of the Executive Committee, I must of necessity speak first of the immense satisfaction and pleasure that all of us are sharing in this reunion,—this reunion of friends and of interests. We meet together on this large scale only once a year, and see faces that we very, very often think of; and I believe that our pleasure increases year after year as we recognize those, many of whom have been for so long our fellow-travellers. It would be out of the question to name you, one and all, but I do want to name Dr. Keightley. (Applause.) It is not, however, only of members who are present that we are thinking this morning, for there are many who are rejoicing with us, who are not present. Naturally, many of you will think first of those who have attended recent Conventions,—of Colonel Knoff in Norway, of Mr. Box on the West Coast, of Mr. González Jiménez in Venezuela, of Mrs. and Miss Bagnell in England, and of many others. Then there are those whom, from habit, we think of as dead—Mr. Griscom, Mrs. Keightley (Jasper Niemand), Miss Hillard, among them.

We are glad, very glad, to be here, and we are very glad to see you. It has been said in criticism that the members in New York are not sociable. I think that is true; for, using the term "sociable" as criticism uses it, we are *not* sociable. There is, however, an explanation. In the first place, some of us in New York feel as though we lived in a state of war rather than in a state of peace, and I do not believe that on a battle field, when you meet even your dearest friend, you stop to talk about the weather or to exchange the news of the day. I think as a rule, on a battle field, you must be in something of a hurry. In any case, here in New York, the truth of the matter is that we look upon our fellow-members as comrades rather than as incarnated sociabilities, and are perhaps inclined to take it for granted that their minds, like ours, are intent upon "our Father's business".

There is another reason: a few weeks ago, at one of the Branch meetings, a statement of the Buddha was quoted about the cultivation of the iddhis or powers—the powers of the soul·

The Buddha was asked what needed to be done in order to develop these powers. He replied that, among other things, we should learn "to see through things", and that we should be "much alone". In other words, sociability, as ordinarily understood, is really a barrier in the spiritual life. I would remind you incidentally that Apollonius of Tyana maintained silence for five years, not while living in a desert, but while travelling through Asia Minor. At the end, he said it had been terribly difficult because he had so often heard arguments that had annoyed him, and that he wanted to refute! As a result of his own experience, he refused to admit anyone to his Order until they had maintained silence for four years. (Are there any volunteers?)

Perhaps that will explain why, by some people, we are not regarded as sociable. It should be understood, however, that we do not grudge anyone his opportunity to be "sociable", if that be what he wants. Now to be more cheerful!

I am of the opinion that, during the past year, The Theosophical Society as such has made distinct progress, because I believe that our sense of unity has increased,—the sense of a unifying, underlying purpose and consciousness. I think there are members who really live in the strength of that realization, and that there are more of them, perhaps, outside of New York than here, because it is easier away from the centre,—members living at a distance being forced to look for the inner, as they lack daily or weekly contact with the outer, which members in New York are inclined to regard as sufficient. In any case, having the outer, it is fatally easy to assume that something of the inner is possessed also. Yet, in the Society as a whole, I have personally noticed this growing sense of unity, and am thankful for it. Inevitably there must remain some who, instead of enjoying and rejoicing in this common rootage, prefer to remain, let us say, "like flowers in a vase". But that is not a healthy life. It is not a theosophical life. It is an isolated life, and what one and all of us need to do is to increase our sense of a common life and purpose—because by so doing, apart from other considerations, we increase the size and content of our own lives.

An individual all by himself is a very little thing, a very unimportant creature, and he can only gain importance in so far as he merges himself in that which is greater than himself. A Master is one who has merged himself with the Oversoul. He thinks as the Oversoul. We cannot hope to do that, but we can distinctly aspire to think with the soul of The Theosophical Society, and as at one with our fellow-members.

People cut themselves off from this theosophical consciousness in many different ways. There are those who still hunger for the joys of the world. Well, Karma will perhaps stuff them with those joys until they cry, Enough! There are others who are sound asleep. They trudge through life, aware of what is going on in a physical sense as regards themselves, but as yet unable to wake up to the point of realizing that that is not life, and that membership in The Theosophical Society offers them life in superabundance, which they may claim, and with which they may become at one. Everyone present to-day should know something of what that more abundant life means. At a Convention we have first hand experience of a shared theosophical consciousness. Professor Mitchell spoke of the importance of distinguishing between knowledge and faith. We should *know* far more than we do if it were our habit to extract the lessons of our experience. I do not of course mean psychic experience; I mean spiritual experience, and that, as the Convention proceeds, we may share more and more vividly and more consciously this realization of singleness of purpose with something greater and more divine than ourselves. That is experience, and experience beyond price. Further, because of that unity we can do collectively what it may be difficult for us to do individually. We may be lifted up beyond our personal selves, toward the Masters who are responsible to-day, as they always have been, for the life and growth of The Theosophical Society.

What is the next step? Granted that we have a deeper sense of unity, a deeper realization of our existence as parts of an organism; granted that the next thing that we need is more faith in the power which that sense of unity gives us,—what is that power? Some people would define it as the power of united prayer, but there are others—I for one—who would think of it in terms of evocation: that we as an organism, because we have become more and more conscious of our unity, have acquired by that attainment the power of evocation, the power

to evoke not merely fire from heaven, but the power to draw out of the invisible the living form of an ideal, the power to make manifest the wisdom of the everlasting Light, to call out from the unseen and to make real in the world around us, the triumph that our souls desire.

Again, granted that we have that power, how are we to use it? I am speaking of members of The Theosophical Society, and it does not necessarily follow, as the Chairman said, that all members of the Society believe in Masters or in chêlaship or in anything of the kind. Where then can we find a point of common agreement where it seems likely that all of us can unite in a single aspiration, a single desire? As members of The Theosophical Society we are almost pledged to do what we can to serve humanity, and how can we best serve humanity? The needs of humanity are infinite, but it seems to me that there is one need as objective and as obvious as any, and that is the need for God-instructed men to rule the nations.

If you will look at the world around you, whether at America or Europe or Asia, I think you will agree with me that it is a picture of deplorable and dreadful confusion—confusion everywhere. A book like *The Aftermath*, by Winston Spencer Churchill, the English Chancellor of the Exchequer (he is probably above the average of politicians), shows clearly that not only during the war itself, but during the years following the war, the state of confusion, of chaos, as between the nations and in the minds of the statesmen supposed to be guiding the nations, was almost inconceivable. Its author says in extenuation that because "modern forces are so ponderous and individual leaders relatively so small", confusion was inevitable. He implies that the problems with which statesmen were confronted could not have been solved by mere human cleverness; but that proves my thesis, that more than human cleverness is needed, and that superhuman wisdom made manifest through God-instructed men can alone solve the world's difficulties, and is that which we should determine to evoke, that it may rule and guide the nations.

There is no time this morning to give you illustrations of the mistakes that were made. Turkey, for instance, thoroughly defeated, was ready to do anything she was told to do, but matters were allowed just to drift, drift, as a result of which tens of thousands of women and children were murdered—Armenians and Greeks; and finally that thoroughly defeated nation got practically everything she wanted out of the Allied powers. But it was not only in external affairs. It was in internal affairs also. For instance, during the war and since, very little has been said about the conduct of the munition workers in England, because none of the politicians has been willing to come forward and tell the truth. Winston Churchill, therefore, at least shows courage when he says in his book that "nearly every manifestation of discontent on the part of the munition workers had in the end been met by increases of wages"; and he puts into the mouth of these workers the words, "Let 'em have it and let's get the stuff." Even during the war, with their brothers laying down their lives at the front, those men were thinking what they could get out of it and said so; and what was their reward—more wages, just to keep them quiet! Was that statesmanship? Was it the result of wisdom on the part of those who governed, or was it moral cowardice? The same kind of thing—lack of principle—is just as evident in this country. Every time we read the morning paper we should see more and more clearly that human cleverness is not sufficient; that humanity has got itself into such a snarl as the result of its own folly and ignorance, and by the assertion of its so-called rights, that it will take superhuman wisdom to rescue it from the consequences.

Yet what can we do about it practically? It is a problem, and as usual, the way to solve the problem is to ask ourselves first, what is the ideal solution, and then what is the next step toward the attainment of that ideal. Most of us would agree, I believe, that when it comes to the ideal solution, the ultimate solution, there is only one, and that is to revert to the system which existed thousands of years ago in the rule of the Adept Kings. That may seem very remote, and doubtless *is* very remote, because the world must earn Adept Kings before it will get them, and the world is in no mood at present to do anything of the kind. Mr. Churchill, I imagine, would consider the whole idea preposterous; yet, if one were speaking to a man like Mr. Churchill, one would wish to ask him what has become of the great souls of the past—where are they—have they disappeared into nothingness? Where is Buddha? Where is Pythagoras, where Shankaracharya, Zoroaster, Christ, Apollonius, Plato if you choose? Where

are all those wise men (some of them doubtless wiser than others)—is it conceivable that they have been snuffed out of existence? Well, it is not conceivable to us. More than one of them declared that they could not be snuffed out of existence, and most of them demonstrated, after having seemed to die, that they were more alive than ever. Adepts exist; Masters exist; and we can at least pray for the day when they will not only govern the nations, but govern us,—although neither one thing nor the other will ever happen until we desire it from the feet up.

So much for the ultimate ideal. What is the next step? Am I suggesting, for instance, that the United States of America should be turned into a monarchy? All I can say is, Heaven defend us—things are bad enough as they are. It is fortunately impossible even to think of a King Walker. None the less, give us God-instructed men, rather than "business experts" or mere politicians and vote-getters. Practically, we must deal with things as we find them, trying, however, not only in the sphere of government but with everything with which we are in contact, "to make this and that more divine". Such is the mission of a member of The Theosophical Society. You may call it, if you choose, transmutation—beginning with the transmutation of our own natures: to take that which is commonplace, and to look through it, as Buddha said, and to see in that commonplace the divinely romantic; to take that which is base and to transform it into that which is radiant with divinity; to take all things as we find them, as they are, and to realize that the Masters stand behind us, ready to aid, ready to do this thing through us, if we will only open the way for them,—to transmute, to transform, to re-create (because they are the great creators). Beginning, as I say, with ourselves, with that which is worst in us, we must transform that; and then in the world around us, we may transform that, and so come to realize that that is our mission; wherever we go and with whatever we come in contact, to feel that with the help of the invisible we necessarily have the power to make this thing and that more noble, to bring it more into tune with the heart and will of Masters themselves. The same thing applies to the government of nations. To lift up one's heart and to cry out to heaven that that which we see in the world around us is intolerable! Then, if we keep our objective before us, realizing that we—if only because of our membership in The Theosophical Society, and supposing we do not possess that power as individuals—realizing that we have the opportunity to unite with our brethren, and with them to call forth from the unseen that which is already there and which is divine and to make that visible to all because of our own faith in it, because of our own conviction, having acquired the power because of what we have done in and on and against ourselves,—then, little by little, The Theosophical Society will fulfil its mission—not all of it, but part of it—and the Masters will be content.

What is the basic cause of the world's trouble? It is that men have ceased to look upon life in terms of spiritual value. The whole of modern civilization is based upon the assertion of man's rights: a right to happiness, a right to life, a right to comfort, a right to his pleasures, whatever he may think of as his pleasures. The truth of the matter is that man has no right whatsoever to anything, and that he has not even begun to live so long as his mind and heart are full of clamour for what is inherently non-existent. Do we realize that if a man stands on his rights, he has in fact dug himself in, has ceased to move, has become a mollusc? We have no rights. We have duties, duties and opportunities; not rights. The right to a vote! What right has any man to a vote? On what is it based? I will go further than that—if he could prove his right, he would be a fool to claim it. Is he fit, is he able, so much as to govern himself? You will remember the words of the *Gîta*, uttered by Krishna: "Live in the faith of Me; in faith of Me all dangers thou shalt vanquish by My grace, but, trusting to thyself and heeding not, thou canst but perish." Trusting to themselves and heeding not: strange that most people think they are perfectly able to govern themselves,—to govern the universe for that matter. They have not learned that they are fools, and there is no beginning of growth or of wisdom until a man discovers that. It is the first step toward a new life. On what else can we stand, unless it be on some realization of our own insufficiency? With that grace from on high, we have a chance: a chance to tie our own hands in some directions, and to ask our fellows to do it for us if we cannot do it for ourselves; and then to seek for Wisdom somewhere beyond ourselves.

What do the nations need? To find wisdom somewhere, greater than their own. Winston Churchill might be puzzled. He probably believes, as Einstein believes, in a God, but "in a God who does not concern Himself with the fates and actions of human beings". The faith of the average, so-called Christian amounts to little more, though he would add Christ as God's embodiment. Full of respect for deity, it is probable that Winston Churchill, if one were to suggest that Christ might have been of some small assistance at the Peace Conference, would look at you with shocked surprise—"Christ is God: a Peace Conference is a rough and tumble affair!" It would seem blasphemous that divinity could have anything to do with a Peace Conference. Further, Christ, being divine, was not "practical". My answer to that would be that Christ knew a hypocrite when he saw one, which is more than can be said of Winston Churchill. In his book he undertakes to dream a dream of what might have happened if the leading statesmen had been wiser. He suggests that everything would have been all right if Clemenceau, considering the terms of peace, had said to himself, "Now is the appointed time for making friends with Germany, and ending the quarrel of so many centuries. We, the weaker, have got them down; we, the conquerors, will lift them up."

Christ, on the same principle, might have said, "Now is the time for making friends with the Scribes and Pharisees", and he might have taken them to himself and blessed them. He did not do anything of the kind, because he was wise, because he "saw through things". If he had been at the Peace Conference, is it not likely that he would have said, "Ye fools and blind", these men do not want peace and it is impossible to make peace with them! —A man must be a fool indeed, if he does not realize that Germany to-day is simply preparing the way for repudiating ultimately all of her obligations to the Allied nations. Germany is just waiting her chance, preparing for her next war. Of course, we are not the only people who see that. When all is said and done, The Theosophical Society does not monopolize the common sense of the world, and there are plenty of others who know that Germany is preparing for her next onslaught. It may not come in five years. It may not come in ten. But she is preparing for it, and Winston Churchill and those other of the world's statesmen who would have thought it ridiculous to appeal to Christ, or to any really spiritual person, for light in matters of world politics,—were either blind or wanted to be blind, I do not know which. But we who are here this morning, believing in Masters, knowing something about Masters, more or less as the case may be,—we at least know that Masters understand, that they see through things; and not only through things but through time: see, through the present, that which is in the future; see, through the past, that which is in the present. It is from them alone that the world ultimately can get the wisdom that it needs, the guidance that it lacks. Yet, we cannot convert the world to a belief in Masters—not in a day, not in a year, not in a century. Maybe, however, we can convert the world to a belief in the folly of its own procedure. We can, it may be, point out the fallacy of basing a civilization upon rights which do not exist. All the great minds of the nineteenth century—Carlyle, Arnold, Emerson, Ruskin—all foresaw the dangers toward which the world was heading, and warned us over and over again that the result of basing progress upon rights, must end in disaster. Very few listened to them, and we, as students of Theosophy, have learned that there is no power in preaching except in so far as words spring magically from the crucible of deeds. That is to say, we must live this thing from hour to hour in our own lives; must make our lives a working model of what we wish to see externalized in the world around us,—if we would hope to compel results. Are any of us still clinging to our rights? We must throw them away. In their place we must put the right performance of our duties, which are, in truth, our God-given opportunities. Yes, life, if it is to be worth living, must be based upon reverence, obedience, self-sacrifice, and upon devotion to the tasks of our individual environment and station. The hierarchical principle governs all things, whether the world likes it or not, and there are those who are wiser than we are, thank heaven! On the other hand, there are those who know less than we do. So we are given the opportunity to serve one another, according to our kind and degree,—not a "right" to serve, be it clearly understood; for if people at any time have assumed the right to serve you, you will know what a terrible experience it may be!

Mr. Johnston said that devotion is not enough; that we must master the science

of Theosophy. Of course that is true, and I am glad he said it; but anything that anybody says may be misunderstood, and I hope that no one will imagine that to "master the science of Theosophy" means no more than familiarity with the books, and then "pitter-patter" based on their contents. What we must do, if we are to understand, is to take hold of these thoughts, these facts, and then to live them, to work them into our wills, our daily lives, and so find out what it is all about. It is chatter about Reincarnation, Karma, and so forth, that has made people sick to death of the truth itself. In spite of our deficiencies and defects, if we can take one simple truth out of this great collection of truths that Theosophy is—the simplest truth of all, whatever it may be,—for instance, that silence is golden—and try to live that thing, then we shall be helping the world, shall be helping our friends, shall be doing something for The Theosophical Society, for the Masters,—and something real. And Masters will take that small gift of ours and make it of infinite value. They are creators, and the smallest gift from us is their opportunity; while, the smaller the gift, the happier we should be, because then we shall know that we are not deceiving ourselves with the idea of making a big gift, a valuable contribution!

Trying to do that sort of thing—remembering always that from books we can get at best the outside of a truth, and that we cannot get to the inside until we have worked it into the substance of our lives—we shall accumulate the power to join in this great chorus of evocation, welling up from the heart of The Theosophical Society, crying as some of the great prophets of the past have cried on behalf of their people: We are in darkness, we have sinned, we have claimed rights that were not ours, we have forgotten that life should be based on obedience to duty, we have worked ourselves and our affairs and our governments into a dreadful confusion—kind heaven deliver us!

It was moved, seconded and carried unanimously that the Report of the Executive Committee be accepted with the thanks of the Convention. The Report of the Secretary T.S. was then called for.

Report of the Secretary T.S. for the Year Ending April 26th, 1929.

Miss I. E. Perkins: I have the honour to submit the following Report:—

Branch Activities

Annual Reports have been received from all our Branches, and have been read with keen interest and deep appreciation. Much effective work is being done—most of it very quietly. All appear to be seeking the same end,—the extension and deepening of the influence of the Society, not through a multitude of new adherents and new activities, but through the changed hearts and lives of its members. They recognize that attainment, by self-conquest, is the surest method of forming a magnet powerful enough to draw the hearts of men toward the inner world—and in that aim they unite their efforts. The *methods* of the Branches show great diversity: one, for example, conducts its work entirely by correspondence, undismayed by the inability of its members to assemble for meetings; another admits no new members unless they are able to attend Branch meetings regularly; and doubtless both methods are suited admirably to local conditions. Equal diversity is manifest in the way our Branches abroad utilize the reports of the New York Branch meetings which have been mailed to them, as heretofore. All have expressed appreciative gratitude for this provision by which, as one phrased it, they can "keep step" with the thought and aspiration of their comrades in New York. Those who gladly undertake the work of preparing these reports may be assured that their usefulness abundantly justifies the labour involved. One of the most gratifying items in certain Branch reports is reference to the special meeting they are accustomed to hold, every year, on the day of Convention, for the purpose of entering into the spirit of the gathering here, and of contributing to our deliberations such light and support as have been given to them. All are represented here, either by delegates or by proxies; and it is clear that they regard their proxies as their special line of communication from and to the Convention, expecting to be brought close through them.

The Theosophical Quarterly

Every member of the T.S. delights in our magazine, and blesses Mr. Griscom for founding it. It is unique in that it is the embodiment of a single purpose, the outer expression of a vivid inner life. To Editors and contributors, we owe an enormous debt of gratitude for the help we have received.

Much has been done this year to increase the distribution of the magazine among the libraries; most of those in representative American communities are included, and members who travel this summer are urged to visit libraries wherever they may go. If they discover any to which the QUARTERLY ought to be sent, the magazine office would welcome information, and could arrange for a free subscription through the assistance of the library committee appointed several years ago. Recently its activities have been extended to libraries abroad, and the current issues may now be found in the great continental universities and in the leading libraries of many countries. Not long ago, a number of foreign librarians received a sample copy of Volume XXVI, No. 3, and in accepting the proffered subscription, not a few of them suggested that the two preceding numbers of the volume would be a most acceptable gift.

For a few libraries, here and abroad, there is a special edition printed on "all-rag" paper, corresponding to that used by the *New York Times* in its so-called "imperishable" edition. This is the gift of a New York member who, not content that the future usefulness of the QUARTERLY should be limited by the short life of modern printing paper, conceived the happy idea of perpetuating it, through copies specially printed for a few widely scattered libraries and individuals. His hope is that, in the years and centuries to come, those copies may point out the Way to seekers for light. The need to cultivate a sixth sense for real things, was suggested by the recent receipt of a couple of early volumes of H. P. B.'s first magazine, *The Theosophist:* great beings had given their interest to its policy, and she had made enormous sacrifices to earn money to pay the printer—those copies might well call forth reverence from us. But what if each one had come to us when first issued, unheralded and not labelled—should we have caught the message and made glad response? How many, to-day, really appreciate the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY?

Something was said last year about a subject index for the 25 volumes of the QUARTERLY, now 26,—that index is still in the land of dreams, and probably will have to be left there, for newer members to undertake when their turn comes.

It will interest you to know that the magazine and its distinctive point of view are commanding attention from certain leaders in the world of thought or action, whenever the QUARTERLY discussions touch upon their particular domain,—for, with little or no interest in Theosophy as such, they are much too alert to fail to appreciate the plane from which the QUARTERLY views their own work and interests.

The Book Department

More book orders have come from the general public than from our own members, most of whom must already be provided with the books we have to offer. A very modest travelling library has been assembled, in response to demand. It contains books that help an inquirer to discover what Theosophy is, and also the issues of the QUARTERLY in which Mr. Griscom's "Elementary Articles" were published. Single books are mailed on request—the only stipulation being their return within a reasonable time, and the payment of postage. Members are invited to draw upon this library when they wish to put books into the hands of interested outsiders. There is also a fund from which our books may be sent to libraries, as a donation; and it is hoped that Branches and members-at-large will notify the Secretary of libraries near them where books on Theosophy would be useful and acceptable,—they will then know where to send inquirers for books to answer their questions and meet their need.

Acknowledgments

Valuable assistance in certain departments has already been spoken of, but at least mention must be made of others: first, there is the member who has repeated the very generous donation of previous years, paying the salary of a stenographer in the Secretary's office, the only non-member connected with the work there, the only one who receives pay for services rendered.

Then there is the "emergency committee", in several divisions. One of these is prepared to burn the candle early or late, when there is typewriting to be done in haste; another is expert in preparing books for mailing. There are three proof-readers whose work for the QUARTERLY deserves our gratitude; their watchword is, Accuracy always, rapidity in case of need. Occasionally an issue will be delayed for a day or two by the breakdown of a big printing-press or a huge folding machine—but never has there been delay because our trio of readers could not complete their work. One of these is the Assistant Secretary, who also takes notes of the addresses at the New York Branch meetings. In this reporting, a more recent member is now assisting most acceptably.

Dear Mrs. Gregg used to end her reports with thanks to her "brother-officers". Perhaps if I venture to speak of my constant indebtedness to the members of the Executive Committee and its advisers, the terms will be sufficiently impersonal so that I might add this: few can know or even surmise the extent to which the older members stand ready to assist those who need help and want it enough to ask for it. Their counsel may always be had, if the most obscure member make an unusual request of the Secretary, or ask questions showing a troubled heart. It is their wise guidance that foresees and forestalls complications; that opens doors of fresh opportunity for us all; that instils reverence for humanity, and a passionate desire to serve the Cause of Masters who have staked so much for the ultimate redemption of mankind.

Respectfully submitted,

ISABEL E. PERKINS,
Secretary, The Theosophical Society.

After certain announcements by the Chairman, the Convention was adjourned until 2.30 P.M.

Afternoon Session

The Convention reconvened at the appointed time, and as the Treasurer's Report was next in order, Mr. Johnston took the Chair.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER T.S.

MR. H. B. MITCHELL: As in past years, the Treasurer's Report should really begin with an expression of his own and the Society's indebtedness to Miss Youngs, the Assistant Treasurer, upon whom has fallen the chief burden of the detailed work, and by whom the financial statement, which I shall read to you, has been prepared.

Its interest lies in its comparison with the reports of previous years. To begin with the receipts: current dues, dues for the year ending on the 30th of this month, are greater this year than they have been for any year in the past decade, $820.89 having been received as dues this year, as against approximately $700.00 last year.

The general contributions and donations to the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY are also larger by about $90.00. This year they are $679.24, as against $592.00 a year ago. The propaganda fund has also received a greater sum. This year it is $1,850.00. Last year it was $1,679.00.

Adding these all together, including the advance payments of dues, brings our total receipts during the year to a little less than $4,000.00,—$3,926.45, as against total receipts last year of $3,514.82, or over $400.00 more.

On the disbursement side, the cost of printing and mailing the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY has increased by about $350.00. This year it is $3,549.84. Last year it was $3,195.50. The total disbursements come to $3,877.01 as against $3,613.43 reported a year ago.

Comparing these disbursements with the receipts that can properly be credited to the year—that is, omitting the $144.00 received as advance payment of dues—we spent $3,877.00 and received $3,782.00. This means that we spent about $100.00 more than we received,—which Mr. Johnston will probably tell us is an experience with which we are familiar, so that if it were not in evidence we should feel that something was amiss. Nevertheless, because our members paid their dues more promptly than in the past, we close the year with a larger balance than we had at the beginning.

There are several things which perhaps the Treasurer may say in presenting this report to

you. The first is how very deeply I regret that there should ever be delay in acknowledging the remittances that are sent us; but despite every effort to the contrary, it sometimes happens. You all know that our Society has no staff of salaried workers, but that all of its activities are carried on as a labour of love, the work being divided around among very busy people who have many duties and many claims upon their time. Sometimes these claims become very pressing, or accident or illness intervenes, so that what we would wish to do at once cannot be done at once, but has to be postponed. It is a matter of very real regret to us when the work we most love is made to suffer from our personal limitations; but our members have been very generous in making allowance for such delays when they have occurred, and I believe that on the whole our difficulties have been relatively few, and of minor moment, since there has been none that has not been easily and smoothly adjusted.

There are, however, certain ways in which the members can aid us, and which will be apparent if it be remembered that the work of the Society is divided into different departments, and that those who conduct them do not all live in the same building, nor share a common bank account. If, for example, a member-at-large sends a single cheque to the Treasurer (or, as often happens, to the Secretary) to cover not only the payment of dues and perhaps a contribution, but also an order of books from the Quarterly Book Department and, further, a subscription to the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY to be sent to a friend, then the Treasurer (or the Secretary, or some one of their kind assistants) has to do what that member failed to do, and write separate letters to these different departments, and divide the remittance properly between them. The cheque, unfortunately, cannot be torn in halves, or thirds, so that one might be deposited in the Treasurer's account and the remainder sent to the other departments. It must be deposited entire in some account, and then separate cheques must be drawn against it and distributed as the member asks. All of this takes time. If members will remember, therefore, to write separate communications upon separate subjects, taking pains to see that each is correctly addressed to the proper department, and if, in particular, they will send separate cheques or money orders for separate purposes, it will lighten the labour of their officers and command our gratitude.

I also wish to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation and thanks for the letters that come to the Treasurer's office, and for the close contact thus preserved for me with my fellow members both in this country and abroad. Several messages for the Convention have thus been sent me, which I have handed to the Committee on Letters of Greeting, so that you may all share the pleasure that they brought to me.

The Balance Sheet reads as follows:

APRIL 28, 1928–APRIL 27, 1929.

Receipts		*Disbursements*	
Current Dues	$ 820.89	Printing and mailing the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY (4 numbers)	$3,549.84
General Contributions and Donations to the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY	679.24	Stationery and Supplies	86.42
Propaganda Fund	1,850.00	Printing	33.75
Subscriptions to the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY	432.32	Rent	150.00
	3,782.45	Telephone	57.00
1930 Dues, prepaid	144.00		
Total Receipts	$3,926.45	Total Disbursements	$3,877.01
Balance April 28, 1928	431.08	Balance April 27, 1929	480.52
	$4,357.53		$4,357.53

Assets		*Liabilities*	
On deposit Corn Exchange Bank April 27, 1929	$ 480.52	1930 Dues, prepaid	$ 144.00
		Excess of assets over liabilities	336.52
			$ 480.52

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL,
Treasurer, The Theosophical Society.

The Report of the Treasurer was accepted with the thanks of the Convention. Mr. H. B. Mitchell then resumed the chair, and asked for the Report of the Committee on Nominations.

Report of the Committee on Nominations

Mr. Johnston: The first nominations are for two vacancies on the Executive Committee, and your Committee on Nominations advises for these two vacancies, Colonel Knoff of Norway, to succeed himself (and we hope he will go on succeeding himself so long as the Manvantara holds), and Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell, who was first elected to succeed Judge McBride, now to succeed himself. The Committee further presents the nominations of Miss I. E. Perkins as Secretary T.S.; Miss Chickering as Assistant Secretary; Mr. H. B. Mitchell as Treasurer T.S., and Mr. G. M. W. Kobbé as Assistant Treasurer.

The Secretary was instructed to cast one ballot for the officers nominated. The report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting was then called for.

Report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting

Dr. Keightley: The Committee has received a large number of letters of greeting, and as you hear the many passages which, thanks to Dr. Clark, have been selected, you will see the remarkable confirmation of what Mr. Hargrove spoke of this morning, and of what Professor Mitchell also referred to, —the unity of aim and effort in all countries and all the Branches. You will see it much more when the letters come to be printed in the Quarterly at a later date. [Dr. Keightley then read from the letters, which are printed in full at the end of this Report. In the course of the reading, referring to Mr. Baker's letter in which the writer spoke of his Branch as "enjoying a rest", the Chairman explained that Mr. Baker had been too ill to write or even to sign his name, but, unwilling to let the Convention pass without sending a message of greeting, had dictated what had just been read. The "rest", therefore, was of a kind which no one need envy. The Chairman also commented upon the generosity shown in a letter from Czecho-Slovakia, received by him as Treasurer.]

The Chairman: You have heard the Report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting, and, more than that, have heard the greetings themselves. I think that all of us must wish to express our thanks to the writers of those letters, and our sense of the way in which they have strengthened our consciousness of the unity of the Society, gathering up, as it were, its far-reaching outposts, and bringing them to a focus here. I believe that in thanking the Committee you would wish formally to express your thanks to the writers of those letters who sent them to us. Next on the order of business is the report of the Committee on Resolutions.

Report of the Committee on Resolutions

Mr. Hargrove: The first resolution which the Committee presents is that Mr. Johnston be authorized and requested to acknowledge, on behalf of this Convention, the letters of greeting to which we have listened with such great interest and pleasure.

Second, that the officers of the Society be authorized by this Convention to visit the Branches.

Third, that the thanks of the Convention be extended to the New York Branch for the hospitality shown during the Convention.

(These resolutions were carried unanimously.)

It is the privilege of the Chairman of the Committee on Resolutions to suggest subjects for your consideration. This afternoon, there is one subject in particular on which I hope you will express an opinion. We do not want to put it in the form of a resolution, as we do not wish in any way to commit the Society; but I think it would be entirely proper if we were to ask for an informal show of hands. I intend to speak briefly, as we are looking forward with eagerness to hearing from the delegates who have, in many cases, travelled long distances to share in these deliberations.

First, however, and as usual, there are certain points left over from the talks of the morning session. A friend expressed the wish, a few minutes ago, that some mention might have been made of Kitchener as an exception to what was said about the statesmen of the World War. It gives me the greatest pleasure to mention his name. He was an exception, because he was a mystic. To put it bluntly, he was and is "one of us". That might seem to some people a claim on our part, but from our point of view, it is a recognition. He was a mystic; therefore he saw further than others. He was the only one of the Allied Generals who declared from the first that the war would last for several years. He was a man who looked through things to the future, and not to to-morrow merely. He was in the fullest sense of the word, a *man*.

One thinks also of Foch—a real man. One regrets, deeply regrets, that he made the mistake of agreeing to an Armistice when he did. There is no question in the minds of many of us that it was premature. Yet he was not only a great general but an example in many ways that any of us might aspire to follow,—an example of selflessness, of devotion, of courage, of tenacity of purpose, of clear and honest thinking, with a rare gift to pierce to the heart of his subject.

We have been listening to letters of greeting of immense interest and value. I think that members at a distance do not always realize the importance of their function. Sometimes they doubt their ability to contribute to the Movement as a whole; are inclined to think of themselves as far away and as dreadfully isolated, while actually it is within their power to maintain—to an extent depending upon the strength of their devotion and the intensity of their daily effort—to maintain a thread, or a rope, or a whole world of union, between themselves and headquarters in New York. It was here that the Masters started the work in 1875, and they have maintained their connection with it. An outlying member, therefore—perhaps in Czecho-Slovakia, or on the West Coast, or in Norway or elsewhere—may keep a link unbroken in the inner world, so that the whole earth is bound round with these threads of gold, along which the Light of the Lodge may travel.

There is one other subject I want to touch on before coming to the main subject: I think that many members of the Society are very anxious to help, honestly want to do what they can, but sometimes say to themselves, Well, I have not had many advantages, I cannot talk and I cannot write, and I cannot do all these things that some other members do,—though I wish it were otherwise. Then they are inclined to accept their own limitations—which may be real—as a barrier to service. That, of course, would be tragic, because heaven knows the recognition of their own limitations is a gain and a gift in itself; but apart from that, what is the secret of real power? Think of H. P. B.: as a young woman, she was a perfectly wild creature, judging by her own statements; but she made a discovery—she discovered her Master. Then she gave her life with absolute devotion. She endured all things gladly; she gave all the passion of her nature in service of her Master, service of her ideal. All the passion of her nature—that was the secret of her life, the secret of her success, the secret of her occult attainment, the secret, if you choose, of her adeptship. Most people squander the forces of lower nature, often on trivialities, on things beneath contempt. She learned that those forces can be redirected; she learned to value her treasure, and to give the whole of it, everything that she was, to the love and service of the one thing she saw as worth while.

Think of a girl, a child, like Joan of Arc. What was the secret of her power? Exactly the same thing: a passion of devotion for France, for its cause, for its king; and giving all the passion that was in her, without any reservation whatsoever, was worth all the cleverness of the world and more. It may be said that not everyone has what she had, to give. I am not so sure. We waste it; we allow it to leak. I am inclined to believe that most people possess that treasure, but that they scatter it in talk, or in worry, or in some sort of self-concern. If they would only stop, and recognize the treasure that is theirs for what it is, and use it in constructive and right directions, they would perhaps be surprised by their own achievements. If they have sins and weaknesses, so much the better, in one sense, for them; because all they have to do is to take the passion out of their sins and weaknesses and give it where it belongs. In so far as a man is immersed in himself and in his little pains and his little concerns and his little appetites, how can he have anything to give?

Of course, meeting here at Convention as we do, it is possible—easy enough—to see the

truth for the moment; but we need more than that: we need to see it so that we shall never forget it. We need to see it so as to carry the conviction with us wherever we go and whatever we are doing, and to see that we must, if only for reasons of self-respect, lift ourselves above our littleness, and hold ourselves there, once lifted; lift ourselves above these wretched personalities of the moment, that are going to wither anyhow in a few days or years, and then go forward with the new life and new vision within us,—remembering, please, that even the murkiest smoke conceals the possibility of radiance, of fire.

We are always inclined to think of the great ones of the past as having been specially and wonderfully endowed. It is said that nobody can imitate Christ because he was Christ; nobody can imitate Joan of Arc, because she was Joan of Arc. Yet each one of us, by reason of our very existence, must have been endowed from on high with all the capacities of God. They are latent, yet must be present within us. Joan of Arc was not *born* a saint. She might have become something else. Nobody made her do what she did. It was her devotion, her desire. She was not educated; probably could not have written an article for the QUARTERLY to save her life! What has that to do with it? Some of the greatest saints that ever lived could not sign their names. It is devotion, singleness of purpose, one-heartedness,—instead of giving our hearts to every little thing that comes our way.

It does not take much experience to know how interest in some external situation can lift us above our physical limitations. If any one of us who has been speaking here had begun the day with a toothache, I guarantee that that toothache would have been forgotten by this time; and if that is true of physical limitations, it is equally true of mental limitations. Interest, devotion, will enable us to rise above them in terms of service. If we as a body of people were to leave the Convention in that spirit and with that realization—keeping both alive—we could accomplish marvellous things. In any case, I do feel that everyone ought to leave this Convention with a sense that the Masters are relying upon him for his contribution; that the Masters have called upon him to do his part, big or little makes no difference; that the Masters are with him and for him through life and through death, if only he will look to them for the fulfilment of his mission.

Now for a different subject. Reference was made this morning to the intentions of Germany. I spoke of Germany as preparing for war, and I want it known that there is more than sufficient evidence to convict her. I need trouble you with only one piece of direct testimony, that of General Morgan, formerly Senior British Officer in charge of German Effectives on the Control Commission in Berlin, and at one time Deputy Adjutant General of the British forces. Speaking not long ago (and of course without receiving attention), he said that "Germany is now spending on field training almost ten times the sum that is being spent yearly by Britain; that she has concealed thirty times as many cannon as she is entitled to under the Treaty establishment, and that she has been camouflaging these military expenditures among the civil estimates." General Morgan acted in an advisory capacity to the President of the Control Commission down to its withdrawal in 1927, and, when he spoke, had just completed an examination of the latest German estimates. He concluded by stating: "I do not say that Germany is planning another war, but she is getting ready for one." My information is taken from *The New York Times* of November 15th, 1928. Glancing at to-day's paper during lunch, I noticed that a former editor of *The New York Commercial*, an authority on the chemical industry, warns the public that the formation, with the support of leading financiers, of an American branch of the German Dye Trust, threatens to re-transfer research in this important field (which is the source of explosives, as well as most of our medicinal specifics and our dyes) from America to Germany. Then, when war comes, knowledge of the necessary processes will be possessed by the Germans, even if stocks and shares (at such times, valueless) be held here. It is in just such ways that German industrialists are co-operating with the military party to put Germany in the position once more to take the aggressive. Their aim is positive and single. The aim of the rest of the world is negative in comparison. The aggressor, or the man with an aggressive policy, has always an advantage over the man who simply wants to remain where he is. England may say, We want peace everywhere; leave us alone. This country may say, in effect, the same thing. But such an attitude is negative and feeble. I should say the aim of all nations

ought to be: Suppress an obvious danger while you can—which would be a very positive and aggressive process. It is sheer folly and worse, to shut one's eyes to the facts. That is one of the things that are so deplorable about our present-day statesmen, including a man like Winston Churchill. He means so well in some respects, yet says in the same book from which I quoted this morning, *The Aftermath:* "Everyone remembers (and tries to forget) the German occupation of Belgium." What virtue is there in forgetfulness? It is absurd on the face of it. We should never forget—anything, for that matter. Even when a man repents, while you should, must, forgive him, it would be as wrong to forget his sin as it would be to forget his repentance.

As bearing upon the subject of Germany, I should like to add something to what I said this morning about the problem of government. We must look behind words and appearances if we would see the right application of theosophical principles. For instance, I believe it to be true that the more democratic the form of government, the less representative is it of the entity of the people governed. It does not follow, however, that a monarchical form of government would be beneficial in all cases. It would be unthinkable here, and to prescribe it universally would be to make exactly the same mistake as was made by well-meaning Americans and Englishmen—missionaries and others—who, in China, thrust democracy down the throats of a bewildered people, with the result that they have been in a condition corresponding to "the staggers" ever since. Further, if we happen to believe, as I do, that a monarchical form of government makes a country more one-pointed in character and in purpose, then, for that very reason, we should be opposed to the re-establishment of monarchy or empire in Germany. As a republic, they are less one-pointed. Therefore I should be inclined to do everything possible to maintain the republic there. Granting that monarchy emphasizes the character of a nation, and expresses more completely than a republic what I have called the entity of a people, then, depending upon a nation's character, good or bad, monarchy may be helpful or disastrous for the rest of the world. The German Emperor was thoroughly representative of his people; just the kind of man his people wanted, and he led them just where they wanted to go,—except to military victory.

Clearly, we cannot jump from where we are, in matters of government, to something infinitely better. We must move one step at a time. I spoke this morning about our need for God-instructed men to rule the nations; and that, I am certain, should be our objective. But as a beginning, let us be modest, and—using a dreadfully abused word, though the only word I can think of to convey the idea—let us demand to be governed by "gentlemen", with the code of gentlemen. Unfortunately, this is Kali Yuga, and therefore, as the *Gîta* says, everything is in a terrible mess, so that who is or is not a "gentleman" has very little to do with birth,—people who are well-born sometimes having the nature of stable-boys or Shylocks, and people who are ordinarily born, sometimes having the souls of nobles.

Consider the matter of the Allied debts: as I remember it, this country is going to collect seven-tenths of everything that is collected from Germany; that is to say, devastated France, crippled England, half-ruined Belgium, Italy and the others, will be allowed to receive three-tenths, while this country will get seven-tenths. Suppose you had had a class of people in control of this country who were gentle people in the sense that by instinct and feeling they would prefer to forgive a debt rather than collect it from friends by whose side they had fought —which I am assuming to be one of the characteristics of gentle people. Would that be too much to expect? Is it quite irrational in its idealism—just decent behaviour, the kind of thing that you do meet in life very often; for I think you will agree that while you do occasionally meet people who are very grasping, not to say disgustingly mercenary, you also meet others who, by nature and by instinct, would rather give than grasp. If that be true of the better type of individual, ought it not to be true of a governing class, of our so-called representatives? It is not true, as they have proved, because first one political party and then another, first one representative statesman and then another, has taken the side of the man who says, I am going to get seven-tenths of all that Germany pays. I do not know that we can do much about it, but if we think about it, and if, in our own conduct, we try to live the nobler code of which I have been speaking, I think we shall achieve something, although it may take years to do it.

That is the subject about which I hope you will express your opinion by a show of hands, though I shall ask only native-born Americans to take any part in it. We do not want anyone to say that a lot of foreigners and English people "padded the vote": so only the elect, only the cream of those who are present,—the birth-right Americans! But first I want to ask the Chairman if we may not hear from another member of the Committee on Resolutions, Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell, because he *is* one of the elect!

MR. MITCHELL: Mr. Chairman, Fellow Members—The thought that must be uppermost in all our minds is our own intense gratitude that we are here, and that we have the privilege of taking part in the discussion of such a question of honour and justice, because there is one thing we can hardly fail to have noticed over the past fifteen years, and that is the profound effect that right thinking and right feeling on the part of The Theosophical Society have on the world as a whole. It is a responsibility that ought to weigh on everyone of us, and make us strive to keep our thought and feeling such that they can safely be reinforced and multiplied by the tremendous power back of the Theosophical Movement.

To speak to the question of the war debts: I do not think that the United States is asking for the collection of those debts from greed. The American people are not greedy. The politicians have misread them there. I believe that the fundamental cause is the same blindness that kept us out of the war for so long, though whether such blindness be preferable to greed, may well be open to question. For years the people of the United States could not see that the war concerned us in any way, and it is this same inability to see the facts that underlies the attitude of America to-day. Most Americans still feel vaguely, for they do not think it out, that the war was none of ours, and that we went in through a chivalrous desire to help the Allies. We who are here know that the United States did not go into the war to help England and France. There were many of us who for three years ardently longed to have this country do so, and we know that it did not. For three years members of The Theosophical Society hung their heads in shame at the attitude of America. The reason we finally went into the war was because we were forced into it, when we could no longer stand having our ships sunk and our citizens murdered. We went in for the same reason that Belgium, England and France went in, because of a wanton, unprovoked attack by Germany. Was it Belgium's war? Was it England's? Was it France's war? Even when our participation had become inevitable, we waited two long months more for an "overt act" of murder against our own citizens, before we finally declared that "a state of war exists", and began our belated preparations.

The average American has forgotten all this. He has come to feel, with complacent self-satisfaction, that though "the war was none of ours", we sent our armies over to help the Allies, won the war for them, loaned them a lot of money besides, and now, with black ingratitude, they will not even pay us the money they owe us. I believe that if the country as a whole could see the truth, there would be a tremendous change, and perhaps it is our privilege to-day to help in bringing about that change.

At the time of our declaration of war, we were utterly unprepared to take any part on the battlefield. The country as a whole felt rightly that our self-respect required that we should do all in our power, as any self-respecting man, or nation, must wish to do his full share in a common cause. This is doubly the case when one's part can only be done at the risk of one's life. It is then only a coward who holds back and lets another take his place. No man of right feeling wants to shirk his part, and if, for any reason, he cannot do his share in one direction, he will want to make up for it by doing more in another. Our full part would have been to take over at once not less than one-third of the battle line, to hold it with our own armies, and to supply that third with food, munitions, artillery, aeroplanes and all else that was required. We were in the war for nineteen months. For fourteen months out of the nineteen, we had no army at the front, took no real part in the fighting, suffered no losses. All that we could do was to provide money, and if that money be repaid us, we shall be in the position where, for three-quarters of our participation in the war, we shall have done nothing. During that time, 550,000 of the Allies were killed, and over two millions wounded. Our total losses in the entire war were 50,000 killed; about 70,000 deaths from disease and about 200,000 wounded.

And it was *our* war. What would have happened if the Allies had not held the line during those fourteen months? We ought to ask ourselves what our position would have been had they made peace or been beaten. Most Americans have forgotten such things as the Zimmerman note, in which Germany offered to give Texas, Arizona and California to Mexico in return for an alliance against us. Would a victorious, arrogant Germany, with a conquered Europe at its feet and the British navy in its hands, have made peace with us for the asking? Germany had nothing but contempt for us then, or she would not have forced us into the war against her. With her own war expenses to pay, and most of the world's gold here, what part of our wealth would she have demanded from us for our participation in the war against her? Should we have consented to pay her an indemnity for peace? Or should we have gone on and fought her to a finish alone? What would that have cost us? How many million lives and how many billions of dollars?

Those are facts to which we like to shut our eyes. We prefer to brush them aside as too remote to consider. They were not remote then. They were real dangers, and we were saved from them only by the self-sacrifice of our Allies in our common cause, in part by the lives that they sacrificed in our place.

Suppose that we had been ready; that we had had an army that could have taken its place on the front line, so that this nation could at once have borne its share against the common aggressor, the wild beast that had broken loose in Europe; suppose that we had been able to do our third, should we not have sent our armies immediately, without any question whatever? We should have fed them, supplied them with munitions, and should have paid for those supplies ourselves. Our sons would have taken their part in the fighting. At least two hundred thousand of the killed would have been our killed. What is the money value of two hundred thousand lives? What of two million wounded? What of the widows? Who is paying the pensions of the widows in France to-day, the widows of French soldiers who fell where our soldiers ought to have been? Are we? Ought we not to be? If a man gave his life in the place of your son, would you feel no responsibility toward his widow and children? What was it that happened?

France and England stretched their armies across the third of the line that this country should have been holding. We could not then supply armies, but we could and did supply rifles, ammunition, food. Now we ask our Allies to pay for the supplies for that third, where our troops ought to have been and were not, and for which we should have paid had they been there. *Because* we did not have the armies, *because* they gave their men and their lives, we ask them to pay!

Our loans to them are great sums, but they are only a small proportion of the total spent by our associates. Great Britain borrowed $4,600,000,000 from us and loaned to her other Allies $8,850,000,000, or nearly twice as much. Her total war expenditures were over $35,000,000,000. Between April 6th, 1917, the date of our entry into the war, and the Armistice, France borrowed from us approximately $2,000,000,000, and spent herself, in that same period alone, $18,000,000,000, to assure the common victory.

There are many things about the debts that the American people have still to understand. I do not think that many of them know the truth about the Belgian debt. Before the Armistice, we loaned Belgium $171,000,000, England loaned her over $500,000,000, France loaned her over $600,000,000. Later, the official representatives of England, France and the United States all agreed to what was in effect the cancellation of their debt from Belgium. Impoverished England and France have kept their word. The United States has not. We have repudiated the agreement of our President, on which Belgium, to her cost, had already acted, and we shall collect the full $171,000,000. I do not think the American people would tolerate that if they knew the facts.

It was our principle, laid down and insisted upon by President Wilson in the peace negotiations, that no war expenses should be collected from Germany—though her attack had caused all those expenses—but that reparation should only be made for pensions and for material damage done. Our Allies, so far as I am aware, have never questioned the strict legal validity of the debts. They have taken the position that they signed their name and, to the extent

of their ability, they propose to honour their signature. But one of the greatest of American lawyers has said that in his judgment a large part of the debts are invalid as a result of our action, and would not be enforceable in a court of law. His point, if I as a layman may attempt to state it, is that it was the implicit understanding at the time the greater part of the debts were contracted, that those debts were at the risk of the war, and in the event of an Allied victory, were to be paid by Germany. (Certainly had Germany won, there would have been no question of repayment of our loans.) Then the United States, by its own voluntary action in requiring that Germany should not be asked to pay any war expenses, but only reparation for material damage, made it impossible to collect the loans in the manner contemplated. Let me say again, the Allies are not questioning the legality of the debts, nor should their legal validity or invalidity affect our attitude toward them in the slightest degree. It is a matter of our honour and our self-respect, not of our legal rights. I speak of the legal aspect only because it draws attention to the moral inconsistency of our position, for we, who suffered no material damage whatever, now propose to take the major part of all the reparation payments to ourselves.

The conscience of the American people has been lulled to sleep by such statements as that of Secretary Mellon that the sums to be paid to us will be more than met by the payments to be exacted from Germany, and hence will impose no burden of taxation on our comrades in the war. To repair damage done by Germany has already cost France over 96,700,000,000 francs, equivalent, at the value of the franc when most of the expenditures were made, to over $7,000,000,000. To name but one item, nine hundred thousand French houses and twenty-three thousand factories were destroyed, and have had to be rebuilt. Interest alone on $7,000,000,000 at 4% is $280,000,000 yearly. On the basis of the funding agreement with this country, there is no year in which France will receive from Germany $280,000,000, in excess of what she must pay to the United States directly, and to England to be paid to us. The maximum left to her is less than half that sum, about $132,000,000. This means that we are not leaving to France, from German reparations, enough in any year to pay even the interest on the amount she has had to expend to repair war devastation. Nor can she add a dollar from those reparations to the pitifully small pensions she is able to pay to her widows and her blind and maimed soldiers. From Germany, whose unprovoked aggression cost us the full sum of our war expenditures, we ask nothing; but from our comrades, whose sacrifice saved us and the world, we are seeking to collect, in principal and interest, $21,000,000,000. The maximum reparations to be required from Germany are not expected to exceed $27,000,000,000, and we are demanding from our friends $21,000,000,000. It has been calculated that for them to pay us this sum will require the equivalent of the labour of four hundred and seventy thousand of their citizens working for us as bond-men for sixty-five years.

Was our part, or theirs, in the common task of defeating Germany, such as to make this fair? There can be no question that at the time we felt it to be a common task, and realized fully that, from the moment when Germany's aggression finally forced us to declare war, it was essential for our honour and security that Germany be beaten. We suffered no devastation of our land, and were far richer after the war than before it. We had an army at the front for only five months of the fifty-one months that the war lasted. We took no part whatsoever in the fighting for three-quarters of our own participation in the war. Our total losses of 50,000 in killed and about 70,000 in deaths from disease were approximately one in one thousand of our population; our wounded, one in five hundred. Great Britain lost 900,000 killed and over 2,000,000 wounded, or about one in twenty of her population killed or wounded. France lost 1,360,000 killed and over 4,000,000 wounded. Practically all of the men in France between the ages of nineteen and fifty were called to the colours. Out of every six, one was killed and three of the remaining five were wounded.

If you were to stand at the Arc de Triomphe—perhaps in a dream—and see the army of the French dead pass, four abreast, at double quick, four men every second, you would stand there for five days and five nights, while, four men each second, that army of the dead went by. Think of it! You would stand there another five days and five nights while, more slowly, the army of the permanently maimed, the crippled and the blind, went by. I do not know how

long it would take for the widows and orphans of the war to pass. There are 630,000 war widows and orphaned children in France to-day.

Who is it that we are asking to pay? From whom are we collecting? The widow of a French soldier receives a pension of $67.60 a year, all that France, devastated, impoverished, only just balancing her budget, can afford to give. The additional allowance for each dependent child is $33.00 a year. A man who is totally disabled gets $257.60 a year. One so maimed that he cannot live without the service of an attendant, receives $481.60, on which to support himself and pay his attendant. This is sometimes increased, in cases of complete and multiple disabilities, as of a man both blinded and armless, to a maximum of $757.00 a year. I wonder from which of these the American people wish to take their payment. It has got to come from somewhere. I wonder which pension we want to reduce.

In a letter to Frederick Peabody, an American who has done a great deal to bring a knowledge of the facts to the people of this country, S. C. Gillespie sums up the situation in a few lines. He wrote: "I am one of the men who did not have to go to France in 1918. Some Frenchman went to the front in my stead and probably was killed. I am opposed to asking his widow and orphans to pay me for the shoes he wore while doing duty for me." But, Mr. Peabody adds, the Government of the United States demands payment for the shoes the French soldiers wore while doing duty for us.

There is little to add to that, save perhaps to try to remove misconceptions. One such misconception—widely held and which has done great harm—is based on the statement of Secretary Mellon to the effect that, except in the case of England, we have forgiven all save the post-Armistice debts. We have forgiven no part of the principal of any debt. We have forgiven some interest. On the basis of an interest charge of three and three-tenths per cent per annum, England pays us in full, principal and interest. Assuming 3% interest, she overpays us and we make a cash profit. France, whose total borrowings from us were $3,340,000,000, is to pay us $6,847,670,000, which represents not only the full payment of the principal of all loans, pre- and post-Armistice, but also includes $3,507,670,000 for interest on them. Secretary Mellon wrote to President Hibben of Princeton, in a letter widely published, that the present worth of this settlement at 5% is only $1,680,000,000, and hence cancels all but the post-Armistice debt. The use of 5% has no justification in fact, and was used—unfortunately with great success, for few understand its significance—only to bolster up an indefensible position. Secretary Mellon himself gave the facts in his statement to a committee of Congress on May 20th, 1926. He said:

"Although the United States has outstanding a substantial amount of Liberty Bonds bearing 4¼ per cent interest, a large part of the Government's requirements are now being financed at a much lower rate. The average cost of money to the United States will probably continue to decline. Securities with high interest rates issued during the war will be paid, redeemed or refunded. If we assume that the average cost of money to the United States for the next 62 years will approach a 3% basis and if we determine the present value of the French annuities [i. e. France's yearly payments to us] on that basis, we arrive at a figure which would approximate their actual value to-day. The present value of the French annuities on a 3% basis is $2,734,000,000. This is approximately 82% of the $3,340,000,000 French debt."[1]

In plain English, all of this means that if in the next 62 years, France pays us $6,847,670,000

[1] The "present worth" of a sum to be paid in the future, say in ten years, is the amount that, if received now, and put out now at an assumed rate of interest, would increase so as to be equal at the end of ten years to the sum payable then. For example, if $150 is to be paid at the end of ten years, its "present worth" at 5% per annum, simple interest, is $100—because interest at 5% on $100 is $5 for one year and $50 for ten years; at 3% the present worth of $150 is about $115; at 1% it is about $136. The higher the assumed interest rate, the less the present worth may be made to appear. Secretary Mellon used 5% to President Hibben when he wished to make us appear generous, and 3% to Congress when he did not. Before the war, issues of British, French and United States Government Bonds bore interest of from two to three per cent.

As no one knows what interest rates may prevail in the coming sixty years, the calculations of "present worth" are very untrustworthy. The indisputable facts are that both Great Britain and France are to pay us the entire principal of our advances to them; in addition to which, Great Britain is to pay us interest at three and three-tenths per cent, and France at the average rate of one and six-tenths per cent.

in payment of the total of $3,340,000,000 that she borrowed from us, we shall at most be giving up some interest, perhaps the equivalent of eighteen per cent of the debt, as Secretary Mellon suggests above. It does not look like a very heavy sacrifice on our part.

There is another misconception, widely disseminated by Secretary Mellon and by the *Saturday Evening Post*,—that the proceeds of the loans, in the case of England particularly, were not expended for the benefit of the United States, but for her own purposes. This is a half-truth whose implication is wholly false and misleading. It is true that the expenditure of a part of the American loans saved England money, just as it is true that the expenditure of the lives of English soldiers saved American lives. It is not true that any part of these loans went for any other purpose than the defeat of Germany. England gave herself and all her energies completely to the task of winning the war. To bring the common victory, she loaned to her other Allies nearly twice the amount that she borrowed from us. Great Britain mobilized 8,900,000 men. Her losses in killed and wounded alone, exceeded the entire American army at any time in France. The fact is that those in a position to know, realized that a crash in the English pound, in its far-reaching effects, would have been the equivalent of a major victory for our enemy, Germany, and would have prolonged the war accordingly. A small part of the proceeds of the loans was directly spent to prevent this, benefiting England as well as ourselves in the process. Another part provided food for the civilian population. How long can you ask troops to fight for you, if their wives and children are starving at home? All of the expenditures were made with the full knowledge and approval of the United States. As the Treasury official who actually made the loans said to me recently, in comment on those statements: "If you think the proceeds of the loans were not spent for the benefit of the United States, do not blame the Allies; blame us, the officials of the United States Treasury, for we made the loans and we knew how every dollar of them went. They were all spent for the prosecution of the war and the victory of the United States."

Another wide-spread fallacy is the division of the debt into pre-Armistice loans and post-Armistice loans. No such easy distinction can properly be made. Let us suppose that France had contracted to purchase in this country, two million rifles. If one million were delivered and paid for on November 10th, 1918, it was a pre-Armistice loan; if the remaining million were delivered on November 12th, it was a post-Armistice loan. What is the distinction? The Armistice was an Armistice, not a peace. We and all our associates had to maintain our armies and to supply them for months after it, for our own protection. Suppose that, after November 11th, we supplied food to the Allies. We had kept many of our men on our farms, raising wheat to be sold at two dollars a bushel. Our Allies had kept theirs on the firing line where they could not raise wheat. Which service was the more onerous? They could not create a crop immediately on the signing of the Armistice. It takes a year to raise a harvest.

One point more, as to what they received and for what we are asking to be paid. The Allies borrowed in all about eleven billion dollars from us, after we had declared war,—before that act, which made it officially our war, no loans whatsoever were made by the United States Government to the Allies. Of the eleven billions, approximately ten billions represented purchases made in this country at prices nearly double those prevailing before the war, and, in some cases, nearly double those of to-day. We are not asking them to pay what they got from us; are not letting them pay the same number of bushels of wheat for which they were charged two dollars a bushel and which are now worth only about $1.10. We are asking them to pay dollars. On the authority of Mr. Winston, former Assistant Secretary of the Treasury (quoted by H. B. Joy from page 354 of the Foreign Debt Commission Report), we charged them enormously increased prices, made huge profits for ourselves, and then "*most of these profits came back into the Treasury of the United States by way of taxes*". In 1918 the taxes on war profits ran to 80%. In other words, we have already received back a large part of what we loaned. The testimony which we quote deals with Italy, but the same thing is true of England and France.

"Mr. Mills: The amount of the purchases of Italy at normal prices with a normal dollar, would not have exceeded $900,000,000 as compared with $1,600,000,000 which they were

obliged to pay at war prices?

"MR. WINSTON: That is, if they had bought with a 100-cent dollar, they would have received much more than they did at the time they actually paid with a 42-cent dollar.

"MR. MILLS: The debt that Italy owes us represents not only normal value of goods received, but in addition the enormous increase in prices and the enormously increased profits made during the war.

"MR. WINSTON: That is correct.

"MR. MILLS: And those profits were all derived by citizens of the United States.

"MR. WINSTON: And most of them have come back into the Treasury of the United States by way of taxes."

This was followed by testimony that all but $80,000,000 of the $1,600,000,000 was spent in the United States. Thereafter Secretary Mellon spoke.

"SECRETARY MELLON: And the point Mr. Winston made a few moments ago was that in those purchases there were large profits and our Treasury took large excess profit taxes, so the Treasury benefited to a very large amount."

Of this large amount, no account has been taken in the debt settlements.

But the heart of the question is not one of dollars and cents. It is whether, in view of all the facts, our own sense of honour and self-respect will permit us to accept repayment of our money from comrades who, for fourteen long months, freely gave their lives to our common cause while we could only give dollars.

MR. HARGROVE: That concludes the Report of the Committee on Resolutions. As I have said, it seems best not to move any formal resolution, but it would be of interest to many of us, and possibly to readers of the QUARTERLY as well, including non-members, to know from the native-born Americans present this afternoon, how they feel about it. I suggest that those who feel that Mr. Mitchell's presentation of the facts requires revised action by this Government, should signify the same by holding up their right hand [the large majority of those present, instantly, and with evident intensity, did this]; and that those who think that things are satisfactory as they are, and that the Allied debt should be collected on the present basis, or on any basis resembling it, should now hold up their right hand [no one responded]. The feeling is unanimous.

THE CHAIRMAN: No further action seems to be required.

The time has now come when it is our privilege to hear from the delegates and visiting members who are with us, and I am going to ask if Dr. Hohnstedt will speak for Cincinnati.

REPORTS OF DELEGATES

DR. HOHNSTEDT: I shall not speak for the Branch, because others will do that; but I am glad of this opportunity to say that I came here to enjoy the banquet of spiritual food which is served to us by the Masters, and that every time I come here, I find the food more sustaining and better served,—inspiring me to become a better man, to do better work, and to think better thoughts. I shall never miss a Convention if I can help it.

In Cincinnati we have always kept in contact with the New York Branch; we have always looked to the New York Branch for inspiration, while keeping in mind all the Branches throughout the country, and looking forward to these Conventions as a time of reunion. Trying always to send some delegates, I think that this year we sent about one-fifth of our membership as delegates. Some of us did not know that the others were coming. Like Quakers, when the spirit moves us, we go; and I know that I try to have the spirit move me every year! Looking through some of my old papers, I was very much gratified to find a badge of the 1902 Convention, at Indianapolis, which I attended, and which I recall very distinctly, some twenty-seven years ago.

I think it would be best to call upon Miss Hohnstedt, and Mr. and Mrs. Waffensmith, who are present, to speak about the work of our Branch.

MISS HOHNSTEDT: First of all, I should like to give you the greetings of the members of the Branch who could not be here to-day; they asked me to say that all would be with us in spirit. As for our work, we have had weekly meetings throughout the season. Last summer we continued our Study Class as long as the weather permitted, up to the 4th of July, when it became too hot to hold classes. We have had public meetings once a month for the last two years, and personally I think that all of our meetings should have been public. We have not grown in membership, but we have not lost in members except by death, and while we are not great in numbers, I think we are growing in inspiration. We have been studying *The Secret Doctrine*, the stanzas of the first volume, and this year we have taken up the second volume. We have tried to impress upon members that it is individual work that counts,—that we must be careful of our thoughts and our deeds, and how we affect others. I read something in the last number of the QUARTERLY which impressed me very much. It is in "The Screen of Time": "Partly, perhaps, because I am so painfully conscious of failure to use my opportunities, as I might and should have done, I confess an intense ambition for members of The Theosophical Society. I want them to be distinguished everywhere by charm of manner, kindliness, evenness of temper, poise, good judgment; I want them to be recognized for their unconscious distinction, the result of lofty and detached thinking, with the purposes of Masters their centre of interest, not themselves; I want them to be able to handle affairs of the world with skill but with unconcern, as angels might swiftly and thoroughly clean a room,—and disappear. I do not want them to be cranks, or fanatics, or sentimentalists, or to drag Theosophy into their conversation when it is not wanted, or for the purpose of dragging themselves into the limelight; I do not want them to adopt an attitude of superiority to their neighbours, or to the ideas of their neighbours. Yet they should remember that the only way to impress the world is to be above the world (can a seal impress wax otherwise?), while never forgetting that the world, in these matters, is not easily deceived, and that the attempt to appear superior will at once be recognized for what it is: proof of inferiority. Slow to take offence, gentle in speech, restrained in laughter, incapable of mere chatter, they will be worthy of respect and will win it."

MR. WAFFENSMITH: Mrs. Waffensmith and I would express our thanks for the QUARTERLY, and also for the opportunity to be here to-day. As regards the work, Miss Hohnstedt has spoken about that, and I hardly think I can add anything to it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Leonard, will you speak to us of Los Angeles?

MR. LEONARD: It is a great pleasure to me to have the opportunity of successive attendance at Theosophical Conventions, such opportunity having been denied me during my twenty-six years' residence on the West Coast. We should recognize our great debt of gratitude to the Cause of Masters, and should endeavour to become more fitting vehicles for keeping the link unbroken until the coming of the next Lodge Messenger. We should not be content with such progress as we may have achieved, from the time of our first connection with the ancient truth, coming to us from the Masters through their agents, and should not entertain the false idea that we have reached the peak of our activity,—solacing ourselves, possibly, with the thought that we shall be able to attain better progress and service in our next incarnation, if we do our utmost in the present one. This has been made so very plain and clear at these Conventions, yet we hear the admonitions without perhaps always grasping their kind significance. We have something within our grasp, which we hesitate to seize, possibly linking it with the sacrifice of our worldly ideas or desires—yet it is in no sense a sacrifice but rather a gateway of liberation from an unreal existence to one of reality. Have we the desire, the will and courage to seize the opportunity offered to us at these annual Conventions—a gift from the Masters, a germ of their life—offered us for our own salvation and the salvation of others through service? We seemingly hesitate to accept. May it be that we are not unlike the rich young man in the parable, who hesitated to part from his worldly possessions for the pearl of great price and who departed from the Master when the opportunity was offered him? If during our leisure hours we give some portion of the time to the reading of devotional books, we shall create a spiritual atmosphere which we shall carry into our daily occupations, making it a basis for each undertaking, and at the same time forming a basis for continuous meditation. In one of Mr. Griscom's letters, published in the QUARTERLY, he advised a correspondent to take his per-

plexing problems to his Master, and to talk to him about them. Mr. Griscom knew the nearness of the Masters, and was a living example of all that he ever committed to speech or writing. May I offer a meditative prayer of thankfulness, in the silence of the heart, to the Masters of our ray.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have two members who have come to us from Venezuela, Mr. Jugo and Mr. Vermorel. May we now hear from them?

MR. JUGO: Because I cannot speak English well, I shall limit myself to saying that I feel very happy to be here, and to represent the Venezuela Branch.

MR. VERMOREL (speaking in Spanish): There is no aspiration of the soul nor any pure and elevated sentiment of the heart which comes not to fulfilment, and so in finding myself in this assembly I see my own realized. It has been in truth a great privilege that has been granted me, and I express my gratitude with a full heart to the Masters; and although I have not been able to understand anything that has been said here, because of my ignorance of English, nevertheless I firmly believe that the simple contact with this sacred surrounding will awaken in me a greater understanding of the work of the Masters, and give me, to carry back to my comrades in Venezuela, as is said in our message to the Convention, somewhat of the power of the "gift of tongues and the healing fire".

THE CHAIRMAN: Will Mr. Harris of Toronto now speak to us?

MR. HARRIS: Mr. Chairman and friends, I am certainly very happy to be here with you to-day, and to bring the greetings and very best wishes of the Toronto Branch. Ours is a small Branch, but we are doing something which we think is of great importance, and that is to keep the door open, through which anyone who is looking for a true understanding of Theosophy can enter. We have thus provided the means by which Theosophy has been brought into the lives of men who, still young, show every promise of entering into the work heart and soul, and of continuing in it; and that is what we need, because many of us are growing old, and it will not be long before we shall have to make room for others.

There is another point I should like to mention: it has been brought home to us that as soon as anyone speaks of Theosophy, or becomes known as a believer in it, he is closely watched by others. We know, of course, that those who claim to be religious are kept under observation by their friends, but I think that those who are known to be members of The Theosophical Society are watched still more closely. Things have happened which show that the effect on other people of the efforts of our members to practise what they preach, is certainly marvellous.

Mr. Mitchell, speaking of the War debts, gave us information and quoted figures that were new to me, and I almost regret that those figures should have to be printed in the QUARTERLY, although doubtless it is best that the truth should be known. My reason is that I am afraid of the effect those figures will have on the feeling of Canadians for Americans, which is none too friendly as it is. There was a time when the feeling of Canadians was very different, but it has changed noticeably into something resembling dislike, which I, of course, much regret.

I hope it will not be very long before I may be with you again.

THE CHAIRMAN: May we hear from the Providence Branch?

MR. ROY: It does us good to be here, and I am grateful for the privilege. With each new day, the desire to become a more worthy member grows stronger.

MRS. ROSE: I cannot very well bring greetings from Hope Branch, because nearly all of us are here, and are very happy to be with you. Our work has been much the same as last year. We have a Study Class and an evening meeting, on alternate weeks. This year we have been very fortunate in having the notes of the New York Branch meetings. Then we read at the meetings various extracts from "Letters to Students", from Cavé, from the old issues of the QUARTERLY, especially on preparation for chêlaship. In Providence it has been said that it is very important to remember that a student of Theosophy should behave in the way suggested by the extract from the "Screen" read to us by Miss Hohnstedt. This is a "large order", but it is what we are trying to do on our firing line.

MR. DANNER: Our report is in, Mr. Chairman, covering the work done by the Pittsburgh Branch, and I will not bother you with anything further in that connection. I just want to say

that we are happy to be privileged to return home again, and doubly happy, on arriving home, to find the family heads here to greet us.

MISS RICHMOND: Here is a message that came to me from Los Angeles by air mail,—from Mr. and Mrs. Box. They say that they are truly here in spirit though they could not be in the body; and they speak of Convention as our Easter.

DR. TORREY: This morning Mr. Johnston referred to the present condition of the physical and biological sciences. The physicist would reduce man to a mathematical expression; the biologist sees in him only a set of complicated reflexes.

In both camps there is a growing worship of mathematics. Some time ago a physiologist from a leading Eastern university delivered an address before a scientific body. He covered the blackboards of the lecture room with complex mathematical symbols all dealing with the subject: how does the earthworm turn a corner?

Now there is a mathematics—a Pythagorean mathematics—which might lead to the rediscovery of important spiritual truths, but the scientist is not concerned with spiritual truths. Likewise there are other basic spiritual principles which, applied to the mass of material which biology has accumulated, would be of inestimable benefit to mankind.

It has been my good fortune recently to be asked by the College where I teach to give an honours course to a group of high-grade senior students, and in a tentative sort of way I have tried to do a bit of pioneering in the field of the New Biology whose outlines begin to be dimly discernible. Whether the hemlock cup awaits us all in June, we don't know, but, anyhow, the exploration has been a thoroughly happy one.

DR. CLARK: I should like to add a parallel to what Dr. Torrey has said. A hundred years ago, Carlyle was trying to write something about "things in general", so people would understand that there is a purpose in life. For many years, Dr. Torrey has had some of his pupils come to his rooms to read and to talk, to try to turn their minds in the direction of seeing that there is a purpose in life. After doing this privately for ten or fifteen years, the College authorities have come to him and said, The students demand it; do not give us a course in science; just talk about anything you want; let it be things in general.—So, after a hundred years, we again have Sartor Resartus!

MRS. FIELD: Mr. Chairman, first of all an expression of gratitude to those who have gone before, and cast up a highway in consciousness that babes and fools may walk therein. It is such a privilege to be here. Those of you who live here, and always can attend Convention, miss the joy that comes from being here just occasionally. I could not have understood the figuring on blackboards of Dr. Torrey's Professor, but I could have told him how an earthworm turns a corner. We are turning a corner in Dayton at present. The work began with a theosophical interpretation of passages from the Bible in regard to personal conduct and problems. It passed through the various stages that such work does pass through. The "Elementary Articles" by Mr. Griscom, published in the QUARTERLY, will perhaps be the next step.

THE CHAIRMAN: We should like to hear from Mr. Perkins, to whom, as Chairman of the New York Branch, we owe so much in the conduct of our meetings.

MR. PERKINS: Over on Eleventh Avenue, the other day, a motor truck passed me, and the sign on the truck said, "Eternal Trucking Company—Long-distance moving." I knew instantly that there was a kind of service that I and some of my friends would like to engage, because we have some long-distance moving that we want to do, some moving from this world into the world of the eternal.

When the very last of our possessions has been transported to the real world, the moving has just begun. To make the point clearer, I should like to tell a story about one of the old 'Forty-niners. He made his pile in the gold placers, moved down to San Francisco, and lived comfortably and happily in Squatters Row. As soon as his only daughter returned from a finishing school in the East, she persuaded the old man to build a marble palace up on Nob Hill. The matter was turned over to the architect and decorator, who were given a free hand to build, decorate and furnish a marble mansion, complete. One day, in the fulness of time, the old miner returned from a journey and found he had been moved. He went to the new mansion

cle, because it is near to my heart. I must think about our task to become chêlas, i.e. recruits in the service of the Lodge. I realize anew the importance of personal discipline for the purposes of the common cause which is as necessary as water for cleaning the body. Also I realize that The Theosophical Society suffers often through its youngest members, and that each one in particular is important for the service. Therefore I am obliged to train myself and to combat energetically all pretexts which laziness prepares, for instance: I am not able to do this or another thing, another member will do it better; what I say is: I will do it as well as I am capable, but *I will work in any case.* The personality inclines easily to delay an object in waiting for a better chance, but this is again a trick of the lower nature; because of this delaying, forgetfulness happens full often. For our service we need personal courage and resolution.

Years ago I found a magnificent example of the personal courage of French soldiers which I cannot forget. We are told about a battle where French soldiers offered on a hill heroic resistance against greatly superior German forces. *Always one* of the French soldiers could work a gun of ordinance with the definitive prospective of death. One soldier after another died, and evermore a new man took the place of his killed comrade. What personal courage and thorough devotion! There is a great difference in the courage of persons, or between the courage of one soldier and another in a common battle.

I imagine that each branch of our Theosophical Society must do duty for a watching-post, and that the individual members should work steadily *to gather and to produce munitions in stock,* in order to be prepared if the call comes. For in opposition to the meaning of the world, we know that we have no peace, but war, and that the battle is not finished. We were not successful in welcoming the "Heart of the World" in full glory, to welcome this Heart as victors. I acknowledge that I did not abandon all things in order to get the real freedom.

At first, therefore, watchfulness within ourselves is necessary, in order that we do not retard, by means of our faults and sins, the progress of our comrades and fellow-members. We know that Theosophy influences in a high degree the thinking of the world, and what immense power Theosophy lends to those who are willing to serve unselfishly.

I realize very often the personal courage and devotion of Madame Blavatsky, who had thrown herself with great pressure against the prejudices of the nineteenth century, and at the end she possessed only a few true friends. What gratitude we owe her because she did not despair; and it is due to her untiring work that we can celebrate this year the 54th birthday of The Theosophical Society.

I imagine that the note of Silence in the last Convention will be present in a certain sense also this year. From year to year new doors are opened to us and new possibilities are inaugurated for us by this Voice of Silence, and it is our task to undertake the right steps. May we all partake in these benefits of the Silence, always in a higher degree, and be able to appreciate them better.

So, filled with gratitude and enthusiasm, I wait afresh for the new Convention; and my whole longing is concentrated on sharing in this great festival in some measure.

Thankfully and faithfully,

Yours,

HELENE ZERNDT.

SCHRECKENSTEIN, CZECHO SLOVAKIA.

To the Treasurer: I ask you to accept the $36. as a common donation of the Aussig Branch to the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, to be used as a contribution to the costs of issuing the complete Index to the hundred numbers of the QUARTERLY. That donation you will consider as a weak expression of our heartfelt thanks, which we owe to the founder, Mr. Griscom, who is venerated by all—and also to the present editors and collaborators of that highly esteemed magazine.

The THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY has endeared itself to us, that we might not miss it as a vade-mecum. The day of receiving it is for each one of us a day of great joy. Being the journalistic organ of the T.S., it is certainly for each member—especially for us, who live far distant from the Headquarters—a continuously gushing fountain, providing us spiritual

nourishment and refreshment; it inspires us; it is teacher and adviser to us, and also a guide through the labyrinth of the events of most importance which are precipitating themselves. But its mission seems to be also to sweep the sleep out of the eyes of all men who are searching after truth. And—after Locarno, Geneva, Kellogg-Compact, Zeppelin and the Negotiations of Reparation—this is a very necessary function, for the commonplace saying of the "economic interests which would reconcile the nations," as likewise the psychism which is working under different aspects and forms, cause narcotic effects. The QUARTERLY has the function of an admonisher, of a guardian, of a sign-post; it tries to shake and to inflame the lulled, numbed, conscience of the world. Therefore we wish it a very large diffusion.

To the Convention I wish from the depth of my heart an harmonious course; to the proceedings, the blessing of the Lodge, in order that the spiritual seed may ripen.

With kindest greetings and best wishes, believe me,

Sincerely yours,
R. JÄGER,
Treasurer, Aussig Branch.

WHITLEY BAY, ENGLAND.

To All Members of The Theosophical Society, the members of the Whitley Bay Branch send sincere fraternal greetings. The continued progress of the Society depends upon the knowledge and intensity of conviction of its individual members. If during the hours of Convention we can, even in a small degree, strengthen the realization of our immortality—that in the mystic past we were, and that we shall continue into eternity as members of one great Brotherhood; that "No man hath ascended into heaven but he that descended out of heaven, even the son of man which is in heaven"—then shall we be better fitted to carry on the work of the Society to form the nucleus of Universal Brotherhood. May the dignity of our identity and destiny be more fully realized during this time, so that we may each continue to build with greater zeal, because of our increased conviction and knowledge.

Yours fraternally,
FREDK. A. ROSS,
President, Blavatsky Lodge.

DENVER, COLORADO.

To the Secretary T.S.: The Virya Branch of The Theosophical Society has held regular meetings on the first and third Sunday evenings of each month beginning in October, and we expect to continue until June. We have studied continually the *Crest Jewel of Wisdom*, reading a few verses in rotation and analysing them as fully as possible; we have taken as supplementary work various articles in the QUARTERLY, parts of the *Yoga Sutras*, selections from the Bible, and other contributions to the subject in hand which have been brought to our attention. The discussion has turned largely on practical questions of conduct and right living. There has been unavoidable irregularity in attendance as practically all the members suffered from the epidemic of influenza, but except for this the interest has been well sustained.

We regret that we are unable to send a delegate to the Convention, but shall keep it much in mind, with the hope that it may be in all ways the greatest possible success.

ANNE EVANS, *President.*
MARY KENT WALLACE, *Secretary.*

GATESHEAD, ENGLAND.

Gateshead Branch sends its Greeting to the members in Convention assembled, with best thoughts and wishes for a most enjoyable and fruitful meeting. We should like to be with you in person, but we send you of our best which space cannot separate.

Yours fraternally,
P. W. WARD,
Secretary.

SANFERNANDO DE APURE, VENEZUELA.

To the T.S. in Convention Assembled: As every year, I beg to send you this year our kindest greetings and wishes for a successful Convention. Congregating at Convention day, we shall be united with you at this solemn hour. Our studies during the Branch meetings have principally been concentrated on our daily theosophical life, and Mr. C. A. Griscom's letters have been of great value for us. These letters carry one to a true understanding of what *real inner* progress is, and they clean the mind of psychic disturbances.

Mr. Griscom was a perfect practical man, and there is no doubt that "practice makes perfection." Therefore I am very glad to let you know that the members of the "Jehoshua" Branch have worked this year on that supreme exercise: *daily theosophical practice.*

May your work be blessed.

D. SALAS BAÏZ,
President.

EAST BOLDON, CO. DURHAM, ENGLAND.

To the Members of T.S. in Convention Assembled: The members of the Krishna Branch, So. Shields, unite in sending hearty greetings and all good wishes for a successful Convention.

Yours fraternally,

H. MAUGHAN,
Secretary.

MIDDLETOWN, OHIO.

To the T. S. in Convention Assembled: Another year has passed, and the "Great Master of the Universe" has given us generously of his great love and mercy. May we all live nearer to him each day, that each little Branch of this Society can aid and help the great New York Branch in the wonderful work it must do the coming year. Without every member's earnest efforts, best wishes, good thoughts, kind words and kind deeds to all, our New York Society cannot do, as quickly, the great work they have set as their goal.

Fraternally yours,

ROSSIE JANE WHITTLE,
Secretary.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, ENGLAND.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: On behalf of the Members of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Branch, I have much pleasure in conveying to you our heartiest greetings and good wishes. We trust that your deliberations, to-day, may be fraught with the spirit of love and devotion, and across the distance we send our contribution to that end.

Another year has gone by and we may well ask ourselves what use have we made of its opportunities. Have we the courage and determination to embody the keynotes of the Convention as they are struck each year? To the extent that we have exercised the will along such lines, to that degree is the T. S. strong and vigorous to-day.

There are other keynotes which are also helpful in our journey from one Convention to another, and it may not, here, be inopportune to speak of one. This keynote is to be found in *Religio Militis,* and it is a clarion call to us English members particularly; a call to appreciate such an experience and to do all in our power to support it. We cannot too clearly and definitely realize that "First-hand knowledge is the prize of those who stake their life upon their faith and put it to the test of battle, and that it can be gained in no other way."

Whatever little our Branch may have done, and however much it has left undone, it has certainly done something to consolidate its forces and to conserve its energy by the step it took in changing its meeting place from a public room in Newcastle to a private house at Low Fell. The Branch, having shortened its sails, and being better prepared to fight with the storms as

they come along, must profit by its renewed vigour and interest, to make headway for the souls of men—not by going out to do, but by *living* discipleship in the various spheres to which its members are called.

So on this great day of inspiration and trust, may we all be strengthened and lifted up for the Work that lies before us. As we are fearless for the right, we shall overcome the forces of selfishness and impurity, and rise triumphant to that first-hand knowledge of the Soul.

Yours faithfully and fraternally,
E. Howard Lincoln,
President.

Aylsham, Norfolk, England.

To the Secretary T.S.: The Norfolk Branch of the T.S. sends greetings and best wishes for the Convention. We regret that none of us can be present in person, but we shall, as always, be with you in thought,—and I think that each year the tie grows closer. We are more grateful than we can express for the excellent reports of the meetings of the New York Branch which, through your great kindness, we receive regularly; we feel in touch with you, and we realize more and more that distance and time are illusions, when we are working for a common cause. We realize the labour it must be to take the notes and transcribe them for our benefit—and we thank you. Your work and your care for us are very greatly appreciated.

With fraternal greetings from us all,
Yours sincerely,
Alice Graves,
Secretary, Norfolk Branch T.S.

Mrs. Graves also wrote:—Once again our thoughts are full of the approaching Convention, and I think each year the tie between us, our tiny nucleus here, and you, grows stronger. We are greatly helped and encouraged by the reports of the New York meetings that we receive, and by the sense of your thought for us. We can hardly see that we make progress; but we do feel that we are not forgotten by you. You cannot think how much this feeling helps in our seeming isolation. We are a scattered group. Some of us have never met personally, and know each other only by our Study correspondence. I am speaking therefore of my own feeling, but I think we must all have the same sense of our unity with you in the common cause.

There are long periods of "dryness" and apparent stagnation, and we wonder if we are progressing at all. Then, when discouragement comes very near, some circumstance or condition arises, bringing a test of our faith. We are faced with something that calls for decision, possibly for action. We turn for help to the Light that has been given to us, to our faith, our belief in Theosophy and the Masters, and our cry for help is heard. Not perhaps, in the way we expect or have imagined, but in so sure and certain a manner that we cannot mistake it, and if our efforts to learn and understand have been steadfast and continuous, we know what we must do. Our standard of values adjusts itself, and things fall into line and we see them in their true proportions; and perhaps catch something of the meaning of the pain and sense of loss that had threatened to overwhelm us. This has been my experience during a year of much stress and strain. I have realized more than ever before that "A little of this Dharma protects from a great fear."

We send you our most heartfelt greetings for Convention, and our assurance that we shall be with you in spirit, in a very real manner.

Mrs. Bagnell wrote:—It seems to me that never has the world needed all that Theosophy can give it so much as it does in this day, and that it is really ready to hear its great message, if only it can be brought to its ear. There is a restless spirit everywhere, but it is one that has an element of eagerness in it. Men's minds are groping after something that they sense, and dimly feel that they need, but so far have been unable to find; and I believe that it is really an ideal that they are seeking for, something above and beyond themselves that they can live and

strive for, and that will give light and meaning to their lives. We know that Theosophy contains in itself the very highest ideal, all that the soul of man longs for and is dimly feeling after, and so we, who have the great privilege of membership in the T.S., have a very great responsibility, for we have to bring this great ideal to the knowledge of our fellowmen. As we have been told in *Fragments*, life here on earth is often a veritable hell, and our task is "to show a way out of this hell, to make men wish to walk in it when shown."

Every year that passes increases the privileges that are ours, and so increases our responsibilities, and each Convention gives us an opportunity of reaffirming our gratitude to Masters, and to the T.S.,—and of learning how we can best prove it, by carrying out the work that they wish to see accomplished in the world. Some words of St. Peter's Epistle have often come to my mind lately: "Qui de ténebris vos vocávit in admirábile lumen." We have indeed been called into that "admirable light", and at each Convention it should be possible for every one of us, if we are not blind, to advance still further into it, until our whole lives are irradiated by it. It is unimaginable that we should not desire to share it with others, to carry the light of Theosophy and the Masters into the world, which is so full of darkness. Two events in the last year would seem to show that men can appreciate a high ideal and be moved by it. Here in England the King's illness roused the nation, as nothing has done since the Great War, uniting all classes in the closest bond of anxiety, sorrow and loyalty. In France, *Maréchal* Foch's death shook the very soul of the nation. On the day of his funeral there were memorial services in every town, village and hamlet in France, and I am told that the national grief and reverence for its dead soldier surpassed anything that one could imagine. In both those cases, I believe that it was not so much the man as the ideal he represented which moved men's hearts so deeply, and, if so, surely they could be touched by a far higher one, that would satisfy all that is highest and noblest in them. I am hoping that this year in Convention a note will be struck that will vibrate through the world and not fall on deaf ears. Above all that everyone of us, members of the T.S., may not only hear and understand it, but so express it in our lives, during the coming year, that all those we contact may be conscious of it and vibrate in unison with it.

Miss Bagnell wrote:—As always at this time our thoughts are turning to Convention, and all that it means to the Society, in rendering account of the past year, and seeking to discover if there has been any intelligent response to the call of last year, and waiting, in the stillness, for the message for the year to come.

Recently I have been travelling in Northern Italy, seeing much of interest, and making the connections with the history of places where the destinies of nations have seen their rise and fall. In such travels, I think what is most striking is the apparent impermanence of all the finest efforts of first one civilization and then another, of ancient Rome or mediæval Florence. What is best in art or literature does survive, to the extent that it has within it the quickening spirit, but the bloom of even the finest civilization is all too soon withered and dead. I have thought insistently of *Light on the Path*, p. 64—"it is left to the individual to make this great effort." In our day most clearly does it seem the destiny of the Society as a whole—as composed of its individual units—to make that great effort, to become the redeemer of the race, and in some measure to redeem the failure of past ages. It is for *that* that the Pioneers sacrificed their lives, and their example is felt by us as inspiration, where alone we might often feel helpless or uninspired. May it be, as ever, an inspiring Convention, and fruitful in its result—for those who direct the work and call for the labourers.

Greetings from Mrs. Graves and Mrs. and Miss Bagnell, sent by cable, were also read to the Convention.

Oslo, Norway.

To The Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled, Greetings. Again you have met on this annually recurring day in order to be inspired with wisdom, and to receive from the Lodge renewed strength and power for our future work. What a great

privilege it is to those who are able to join you on this occasion, having thus the opportunity to share directly in the blessings bestowed on you all, and through you on the whole Society, whose Members and Delegates you are.

I shall never forget the Annual Convention of 1927, at which I was so fortunate as to be present. It brought me to feel vividly in contact with you, not only at every recurring Convention, but always when I am going out to you in my thoughts and feelings of warm sympathy and love, which happens so very often, nay even every day.

With renewed greetings, and best wishes from your Comrades in the Oslo Branch of The Theosophical Society,

I am,
Sincerely yours,
THS. KNOFF,
Chairman.

Colonel Knoff, who also sent greetings by cable, wrote in a personal letter:—If I had been able to attend the Convention this year, I should have liked to draw the attention of those present to the eighth article on "Lodge Dialogues" in the January issue of the QUARTERLY. I should have confessed what I felt when reading it. I was struck by its tremendous wisdom,—by the excellent lesson it gave on our conception of God and our fellow-men,—its lesson about tolerance, compassion, detachment, kindness, and caution, which qualities are so important for us to possess, and to use from the Divine point of view, when trying to do good work for our fellow-men and the cause of the Masters.

You have, of course, read that article all of you, and noticed what I have said here; but there might be some members of the T. S., spread about in different countries, who have not yet made it a subject of repeated study and meditation. To them my feelings, when I was reading that article, might act as an impulse to reread it again and again, and to meditate on it frequently.

SALAMANCA, NEW YORK.

The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled, Greetings to you all: The Sravakas Branch is experiencing one of those rest periods of which we so often read, but I am expecting great things for it, for did the Master not say, "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled"?

Fraternally yours,
HOMER P. BAKER.

Per H. C. B.

CARACAS, VENEZUELA.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: No year has really been lived unless in it we have gained a new conception of Theosophy and of the mission of The Theosophical Society. Otherwise we should have to say, with Titus, on the arrival of the day preceding the Convention: "We have lost the year." In this memorable hour of the Convention, your comrades of the Venezuela Branch earnestly desire, for all and every one of you, that in meeting again to examine yourselves and make your reports, each one may find that his understanding has widened, or at least that he may be able to say to himself that he has not understood all that he would wish to understand—which in itself is an understanding.

The world, at this time of severe shocks, interior and exterior, is in dire need of a wide diffusion of this understanding, and the duty of the members of the T. S. is to serve as silent inductors. The world is in a state of restlessness, and all currents of thought and will are reversed in every sense—in political, scientific, and religious activities. Fortunately, among many, the com-

pelling personality of Jesus holds sway, and the auditors of the Sermon on the Mount are increasing in number. This is most evident in France, where, even among the very priests of the Christian sects, the doctrine of Him whom they call Master is beginning to be expounded as the fuel of life, rather than as a soft cushion for spiritual indolence.

And it would seem that the same problems which arose some two thousand years ago, and which led to the coming of Christianity, are springing up again to-day. At that time the scene was laid in Palestine, where the movement was met by the neutral figure of the juridical law of Rome and the inquisitorial figure of the religious law of Israel, which together sought to bar its progress. In culpable partnership these two conspired to raise a barrier to the impetuous current of the Spirit which, flowing from Egypt, its source, eddied around the very edge of the continent of mysticism in the endeavour to leap at once to the full West, where Destiny had written that some day the latest flower of Universal Love, which the mild and humble Galilean had come to plant, would bloom in all its radiant splendour. As the field for this, the Mediterranean Basin—the melting pot of races and civilizations—presented itself; as a reserve, the Isle of Albion, and as a decisive Marne, the fertile soil of France. Since then, the message of redemption of the latest Avatar of the Great Lodge, which began with the patient symbol of the Cross in Palestine, and which has to transform itself into the symbol of the Heart in the France of ideals, still walks along an interminable way of sorrow with the load of redemption on its shoulders.

Now in the presence of such a state of perturbation and turbidity and cowardice through which the world is passing, and which has recently assumed a universal character, where shall be found a clarifier and a panacea? In Theosophy, in The Theosophical Society, in the infusion of Theosophy into science and into religion; in teaching the world to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness", knowing that the "rest" comes by accretion; in teaching it that science and religion are two expressions of the soul, the two pans of the balance in which the Spirit will weigh life.

This will seem, perhaps, to many members of the T. S., to be something already known; but the fact is that it is not sufficient to know it, one must *be* it, for well regulated charity begins with oneself, since indeed it is impossible to give unless one already has. And if, according to the terrible saying of the Maha Chohan, the T. S. exists in order to be the corner stone of the future religions, and, according to H. P. B., the granary of the societies of the twentieth century, then it is our unquestionable duty as members of the T. S. to infuse and induce the theosophical spirit and method into our surroundings, and to spread them by contagion to the religions and the societies of our time; to use what we have to the best of our ability, since that does not imply the creation of new liturgies and rituals, new academies and schools, but a new spirit in what already exists and is at our hand. And this utilization is possible because our Theosophical Society of to-day, by its incarnation, at the transcendental Convention of Boston in 1895, into the body of the T. S. of 1875, passed from one cycle into another without the night of Devachan, and so opened and initiated a new and unimpeachable opportunity which makes possible the salvation of this civilization, in its period of natural decline, and enables us to make use of it as a vehicle for the incarnation of the *new religions* and the *new societies*, to transport the world to the plane of a tropical zone, of a perpetual spiritual springtime. To-day the apocalyptic cry is, "I make all things new."

In the presence of this unprecedented opportunity and privilege, many of us will ask ourselves to whom we owe so much, and what are the causes of such an outcome. Those of us who believe in Masters have the answer already formulated; and those who have given themselves to a study of the various reappearances of the Theosophical Movement in the last quarter of each century may perhaps find an answer in the fact that a different method was employed in 1875. The movement was not initiated by a single individual; there were several, and among them two, H. P. B. and W. Q. J., had had experience in previous movements, and so took all possible precautions to overcome this time the action of those causes which had precipitated the failure of the former manifestation. Thus it did not enter into their plan to establish a rigid dogmatism or a circumscribed philosophy from which one would hope or the *immediate* fruit of acceptance and partisanship, but they opened the doors of complete

freedom of thought within a mutual fraternal respect, which in time, and only in time, would germinate in a universal collective consciousness. The conception was, instead of providing a special kind of bread to which all palates should conform, to furnish necessary leaven with which each one could make the bread which he himself preferred. By not expressing a preference for any special religion, or prescribing any form of government as universal systems in themselves, to Cæsar was left what is Cæsar's, and to God what is God's. Nevertheless, in its three fundamental objects which, with the synthesis of the universal evolutionary scheme, revealed and gave the only key to every religious system and every governmental form, these three propositions naturally correspond in religion and governmental politics to the laws which are immanent and inherent in every manifestation. In the religious manifestation it is the purgative, illuminative, and unitive way of all theologies; in the scheme of government it corresponds to the fundamental bases of the constitution and conduct of life itself. In THE QUARTERLY for April, 1916, there is a reply by X. Y. Z. to Question No. 195, in which it is said that the ideal form of government would be that which combines in due proportion the three recognized aspects of democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy, as being the system used by the Lodge, that is to say, a combination of the three objects: a republic of creeds, races, sexes, castes, and colours; an aristocracy in sciences, philosophies, and ancient and modern religions; and an absolute monarchy of the consciousness of the Higher Self which must reign supreme in all the acts of life.

We are well aware that you already know all this, but in setting it forth here we wish to say that we, members of the Venezuela Branch, have learned it from you and our incomparable QUARTERLY, and in this way express our gratitude, which in itself might be regarded as our chief message.

Our meetings follow their normal course, with almost the same attendance. They were suspended during the months of August to October.

As the quarterly edition of *El Teósofo* is not at present practicable, we have limited the issue to one number a year, that of July. In that the report of the Convention will hold the place of honour. We await a more propitious era in which we can resume the publication of four numbers a year.

We are with you in spirit as in outward remembrance on the day of the Convention and during the same hour; and we raise our heartfelt prayers to the Masters that, in our mission of serving them and mankind, it may be in our power to "make all things new", and that to us may be given at this time, in which the world cries out for help, "the gift of tongues and the healing fire."

A. GONZÁLEZ JIMÉNEZ,
Corresponding Secretary.

ADUANA DE LA GUAIRA, VENEZUELA, S. A.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: Please accept my brotherly greetings and sincerest wishes for a successful Convention in the present year. With my whole heart I am with you in spirit.

We have been told that the strong efforts of the Masters of Wisdom to supply the spiritual needs of the world have been concentrated and incarnated in The Theosophical Society. Therefore, we must consider this and acknowledge it to the gods. I have in mind the watchword of the Convention of 1927, "We must call down fire from heaven", to inspire our minds and our hearts.

Fraternally yours,
J. MELITON QUINTANA.

ONEAL, ARKANSAS.

To the Secretary T. S.: May I ask you to convey my sincere greetings to the members in Convention Assembled; also my lasting gratitude to those who make the QUARTERLY possible.

I should like above all things to be able to attend one Convention of The Theosophical Society; and though I am not with you next Saturday in person, I shall surely be there in thought and in spirit. I hope our Lord's blessing may be realized by every member present.

I realize the necessity for increased effort on the part of each and every member of The Theosophical Society towards becoming a real centre of spiritual life, ever trying to become disciples of Masters who have sacrificed so much that we might benefit. Only our daily life can demonstrate whether or not we are worthy; whether or not we have appreciated their *endless* sacrifice for us.

With best wishes to all,
Sincerely and fraternally yours,
WM. E. MULLINAX.

BERLIN-SCHÖNEBERG, GERMANY.

To the Convention of the T. S. in New York: To the members and friends in Convention assembled, we send our heartiest greetings and wishes for a very successful outcome of the Convention's activity. Our entire sympathy will be united with your efforts. From the stillness of the spiritual life we all constantly receive the power for the work we have to do; we long for nothing so much as to be enabled to give to the souls of those around us, the help through which they also can find this quiet source of life and power which comes from the Master. May this animating spirit be intensified in us all by our united effort during the Convention. Moreover, an apparent failure should not discourage anyone, as the result of our work is in the hands of the Master.

Most fraternally yours,
HELLMUTH PINTHER.
RICHARD WALTHER.
LUISE BETHGE.

TRIESTE, ITALY.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled, New York: Dear Fellow-Members: This year also our thoughts fly to you over the ocean to bring you our kindest wishes and greetings. The darkness here is evermore thicker, and the thin light of human sympathy and tolerance which still flickered in the first years after the war, is nearly burnt out. May the Master save us from complete darkness, from which it will never be possible to escape. Pray for Europe!

Fraternally yours,
ALBERTO PLISNIER.
TERESA PLISNIER.

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: Dear Comrades: Our greetings and our prayers for the Convention. A year has passed since the last Convention which brought us so great a promise, but was exacting also a strong effort of all of us. Have we accomplished what was expected from us, has the promise drawn nearer to its realization? Have we really formed a ladder for the ascension of the Chêla who is to become the link between ourselves and the Lodge? The present Convention, we believe, may tell us thereof.

Speaking of ourselves we humbly confess that our mite was very small, and we fear that we gave not all we ought to have given, that we yielded too much to our weakness; but, small as it is, we lay it on the Altar, trusting that the Masters in their mercy may accept it, endowing us with new strength to do more and better work in the year to come. While you are assembled at this Holy Day of ours, we shall lift up our hearts to unite with yours, trying to catch an echo of the Message which will be delivered to you and to all of us. Silence, Peace,

Trust and a renewed fierce determination to endure, endure for ever, that is what we will hold present in our hearts.

May the Masters bless you and your service in their work, the deliverance of Humanity.

Ever yours in fraternal love,
LEO SCHOCH.
ELISABETH SCHOCH.

BERLIN-WILMERSDORF, GERMANY.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: We deem it a great pleasure to be able again to convey to you our heartiest greetings and good wishes for a successful Convention. We shall be united with you heart and soul, and pray that Masters may bestow their blessings upon your deliberations that day.

As to our work, we must say it has been carried on quietly. We have occupied ourselves with the study of articles taken from the QUARTERLY, as well as the heart- and soul-stirring Convention report. Our studies have, however, been marked by a special feature. Each member has given a paper entitled, "Upon what grounds rests my conviction as to Germany's blame in the World War." Owing to the fact that these various addresses were essayed in a manner reflecting the individual conception of each member in regard to Germany's blame in the war, they were, just because of this, the subject of animated discussion. They revealed in mutual emphasis the right understanding of theosophic principles, an harmonious unity of heart, and a profound and ever-increasing will to serve.

As a consequence of this striving for ever greater unity of heart, profundity, and perfection —which embraces a continually growing devotion to the Cause—we shall become, one day, what at present we can only dare hope,—supporting, maintaining members, who stand up for the continuity of the T. S. like the "Ancients".

On behalf of the Wilmersdorfer Study Class, we remain

Very sincerely and fraternally yours,
OSKAR STOLL.
ALFRED FRIEDEWALD.

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA.

To the Secretary T. S.: This year has been the most wonderful and helpful to our small band of students, of all the years in our Theosophical experience. We understand the word "disciple" as meaning also "higher humanity", and we have had greater help than ever before along this line of thought and endeavour. The QUARTERLY has been wonderful, also. It is as though all previous work had really been to understand *more* this last year. Greetings to the Convention.

JENNIE B. TUTTLE.

TORONTO 13, CANADA.

To the Secretary T. S.: The Convention will soon be in session and I wish for all who attend, that peace that always comes when the Masters are present, as I believe they are present at this time. I am sure their influence must be felt; in fact year by year this influence is reflected in the QUARTERLY and felt through reading the account of the Convention. And so once more I wish for you and all fellow members,—Peace.

Sincerely yours,
S. WALSOM.

Messages of greeting received from Mr. Birger Elwing (Texas); Miss Flora Friedlein (Kansas); Miss Flora J. Henry (Louisiana); Mrs. Antonin Raymond (Japan); Miss E. Silveira (Venezuela); Mr. A. Valedon (Venezuela); and Mr. F. Weber (Germany), were also read to the Convention.

REVIEWS

Rābi'a the Mystic, and her Fellow-Saints in Islām, by Margaret Smith, M.A., Ph.D.; Cambridge University Press, England, 1928.

This book suffers from having been compiled originally in order to obtain a University degree; that is to say, it had to be written so as to impress the examiners, representing the world of "scholars"; and "scholars", with few exceptions, are dominated still by German methods and standards. They are "thorough", which means that the more you quote from other people, and the more you crowd your pages with references and footnotes, and the less you think, the more scholarly you are. There is the usual crushing "Survey of Sources." Yet, in this case, we sympathize with the author, believing that she did these things because she had to, and not because she liked it. Our belief is based upon the spirit in which she writes, and upon her evident sympathy with, and understanding of, religious mysticism. In spite of the methods imposed upon her—of her "goose-step"—she manages to reveal Rābi'a as one of the saints of God,—not a chêla, but a typical saint, who would have been annexed and canonized long ago by Rome, if it were not for the barrier of a name or two (such as "Allah" for "God"), and similar accidents of birth and environment. The Sūfis of Rābi'a's day (she was born in A.D. 717, in Basra) were intensely and astonishingly Christian in all except name; and their Christianity was of a very high order. Not many among Christian saints have seen as deeply into the spirit of things as they did. Take, for instance, the subject of Repentance: Rābi'a was always weeping for her sins, but, when questioned, she said: "My sorrow is not for the things which make me grieve; my sorrow is for the things for which I do not grieve." They held that "repentance may be from what is wrong to what is right—the common kind; from what is right to what is more right—that of the elect; and from selfhood to God, which belongs to the degree of Divine love." Again, "there is the Repentance of return, through fear of the Divine punishment, and Repentance through shame of Divine clemency. 'The Repentance of fear is caused by revelation of God's Majesty, the Repentance of shame by the vision of God's Beauty.'" Nor was their understanding of sin narrow: "The sins of those who are near to God are the good deeds of the righteous."

Consider, also, this definition of gratitude (we may apply it in human as well as in divine relations): "Gratitude is the vision of the Giver, not of the Gift." The same thing was said by Mme. Guyón, as the author reminds us in a footnote; but the definition quoted is from Al-Qushayrī, who lived and taught before the Normans had conquered England.

It is a valuable book in many ways, though it can in no sense replace the works of Professor Nicholson, whose studies of Sūfism cover a much wider field, while Miss Smith limits herself to her subject,—Rābi'a the Mystic, who belonged to a period ante-dating the metaphysical developments within Islām, and the influence of Indian thought, particularly of the Vedanta. This is as far as Rābi'a travelled,—and we must revere her for having travelled so far: "O my Lord, if I worship Thee from fear of Hell, burn me in Hell, and if I worship Thee from hope of Paradise, exclude me thence, but if I worship Thee for Thine own sake then withhold not from me Thine Eternal Beauty." It was Mahmūd Shabistarī who said: "If you ask, Who is the traveller on the Way? It is one who is aware of his own origin. . . . He is the traveller who passes on speedily; he has become pure from self as flame from smoke"; and again: "In God there is no duality. . . . The Quest and the Way and the Seeker become one." But

Shabistarī lived centuries after Rābi'a, following in the tracks which she and a thousand other Sūfi saints had beaten and established for him. He reaped in understanding what they had sown in love and sacrifice.

H.

Madeleine Sémer, Convert and Mystic, by Abbé Félix Klein; translated by Foster Stearns, with Foreword by James J. Walsh; The Macmillan Company, New York, 1927; price, $2.25.

Abbé Klein, writer of many books which have been crowned by the French Academy, and well known in America as a distinguished lecturer, has given us in *Madeleine Sémer* an absorbingly interesting human record. Madame Sémer, who died less than eight years ago, was, before her conversion, a woman of the world, beautiful, cultivated, charming, who in her early years was surrounded by every luxury, the centre of a brilliant social life. An insatiable reader, her mind was steeped in rationalistic thinking—Rousseau, Renan, Nietzsche. With delicate satire she mocked at all religious thought, but, endowed with unusual gifts of heart as well as mind, she had one supreme gift, "the instinct for loving others for themselves," coupled with a passionate desire to *give:* always to do better than her best; always to outdo her utmost. "*Toujours rêver au-delà et désirer davantage,*"—that was her cry. Hers was an ardent and generous nature, its very richness being first her undoing and later her making. Her life shattered while she was still young, she passed through many years of bitter humiliations, poor and alone. The very depth of her misery, however, made her reach out for something of which she had never before felt the need. "I love God without believing in Him; I believe a whole lot of things that I do not love, and I prefer to live by my loves rather than by my beliefs,"—so she wrote in her Journal. She was groping, she hardly knew for what. She began to pray, the result being, "peace, courage, resignation and charity; longing so intense that it had all the force of an action." Then something happened. Alone in her room one night, weary, anxious, oppressed with an overmastering sadness, yet clinging courageously to the thought, "What matters sorrow, since I desire the Good, and the Good above everything," suddenly: "I saw beside my face a sweet and beautiful countenance, a shoulder was offered to my inquietude, and I retain the remembrance of a clear second when I smiled at Jesus." Never again was her life to be the old life of groping, for, although she evidently found some difficulty in accounting for the "marvellous vision", the Master had come to claim his own, and Madeleine Sémer knew that her heart belonged to him, and hers was not the nature to hold back anything, once she had given herself. There were still many years of suffering ahead of her, but her spiritual progress continued steadily, and little by little she won her footing in the real world, until finally her personal life was lost in a mystical union. Anyone interested in mystical experience will find inspiration in this book, and students of Theosophy will be among the first. The book is built upon the Journal and letters of Madame Sémer, preserving for us many of her most intimate thoughts, and giving us a vivid picture of this ardent soul. We are often reminded of Elizabeth Leseur, or of Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity, though Madeleine Sémer seems to live and glow in a special place of her own; and we are much indebted to Abbé Klein for the skill and sympathy with which he has told this story of a soul's journey toward the Kingdom of God.

Y. M.

The People of Tibet, by Sir Charles Bell. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1928; price, 21s.

This is the second book which Sir Charles Bell has written about the mysterious land to the north of the Himalayas. The first, *Tibet: Past and Present*, was published four years earlier. A third is promised, dealing with the religions of Tibet. Sir Charles Bell is also the author of a grammar of colloquial Tibetan and an English-Tibetan dictionary. These numerous writings imply a thorough and intimate knowledge of a country of great interest to students of Theosophy, and, from a study of his books, one reaches the conclusion that Sir Charles Bell has given the first true account of the hidden land, an account which is in complete harmony with the conditions suggested by sentences in the writings of Mme. Blavatsky, and in some of the letters addressed from the Snowy Mountains to Mr. Sinnett.

Sir Charles Bell does not generalize or paint in broad surfaces. He accumulates innumer-

able brief notes regarding each subject; let us say, children, or land tenures, or dress, and so constructs a mosaic picture. For the present reviewer the most interesting thing in this singularly attractive book is the translation of a Tibetan word: "When riding with another Tibetan friend, he calls to an elderly peasant woman to move to the side, and in doing so addresses her as 'Mother' (*A-ma*). Those between about thirty and fifty years of age we may accost as 'Elder Sister' (*A-chi*); the younger ones as 'Daughter' (*Pu-mo*)." This brings to memory a phrase in the letters to Mr. Sinnett (p. 315): "He will turn back on you some day, *pumo!*" The masterful Old Lady was addressed by her yet more masterful Guru as "daughter".

Sir Charles Bell was, in his several official visits to Tibet, particularly impressed with the complete sincerity and devotion of the Tibetans; they are, he says, the most religious people in the world, so much so that for many years the population of the nation has been decreasing because so many boys and young men are determined to turn their backs on worldly life, and devote their entire energies to spiritual discipline, or, as he phrases it, the way of salvation. He has much to say regarding the position of women: "Even in religious careers the Tibetan women have come to the front from time to time. The standard modern example of this is to be found in the monastery on the peaceful hill overlooking the 'Lake of the Upland Pastures' and facing the eternal snows of the Himalaya. . . . For here resides the holiest woman in Tibet, the Incarnation of the goddess Dor-je Pa-mo. The present is the eleventh Incarnation. When one dies, or 'retires to the heavenly fields', her spirit passes into a baby girl, and thus the succession goes on. The ninth Incarnation was the most famous of the line." Then follows a very sympathetic account of his visit to the "eleventh Incarnation", a young woman of twenty-four, whose photograph Sir Charles Bell was allowed to take, and with whom he talked in her own tongue for some time: "Her sweet, though pensive, smile, her youth, her quiet dignity, invested the young abbess with a charm that was all her own."

Sir Charles Bell describes Tibet as a landed aristocracy, in social structure not unlike the Britain of more idyllic days, and, in speaking of the ruling class, he again and again uses words like "gentleman" and "lady," with a feeling that they are entirely fitting. Indeed, he more than once plainly says that in generous and graceful courtesy he was no match for the aristocrats among "the laughter loving people of Tibet".

One's only regret is, that the book is so good, and describes a land so attractive, that others may be tempted to penetrate thither, inevitably bringing with them the restless spirit of the West.

J.

El Teósofo. It was a great pleasure to receive the double number of *El Teósofo*, for January and April, 1928, completing the third volume of this most attractive magazine of one hundred pages, published by the Venezuela Branch of The Theosophical Society, at Caracas, and through which this Branch continues the excellent work which it has already done in making theosophical writings available to Spanish-speaking readers. The current number contains a notice that hereafter it is to be an annual, published in July instead of quarterly. It is to include among other translations, the full report of the Convention of The Theosophical Society, as published in the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY. A statement of its contents shows the value of the magazine. The number just received contains in Spanish the full report of the 1928 Convention at New York; Mr. Johnston's lecture on Theosophy given the Sunday after the Convention; "Fragments"; an article by Mr. Judge from the *Irish Theosophist* of July 15, 1893, on "Meditation, Concentration and Will"; Jasper Niemand's article, "The Christian Life", from the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY of April, 1927; "Obedience" by E. M. S. from the QUARTERLY of October, 1909, and Mr. Griscom's "Letters to Students." There are also Notes by A. G. J., and reviews of recent issues of the QUARTERLY. The number closes with an account of the meeting of the Venezuela Branch held at the time of the 1928 Convention of The Theosophical Society, and the tribute paid by those present, standing, to the memory of Mr. Griscom.

M.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION No. 346.—*Several statements made in the article on "Perseverance" in the July, 1927,* QUARTERLY, *on page 31, lead me to ask whether students of Theosophy are justified in demanding from those with whom they come in contact the same attitude toward life which they themselves try to maintain.*

ANSWER.—It would perhaps be well to make a distinction between an *attitude toward life* and a *standard of conduct.* There are probably few students of Theosophy who do not believe in Masters, in Reincarnation and in Karma, and their attitude toward life would therefore be based on these convictions; but for a student of Theosophy to "demand" from others an attitude toward life depending on a belief in Reincarnation or Karma, would obviously be little short of an impertinence. There are, however, certain standards of conduct which have been invariably accepted by all great moral and religious teachers, and which are to be found in any code of ethics; such, for instance, as the conscientious performance of duty, thoroughness, courtesy, and the like. Why would not a student of Theosophy (we should expect it from any one else sufficiently public spirited to recognize the social and moral value of these standards)—why would not a student of Theosophy be entirely justified in demanding first, of course, from himself, but also, during working hours, from those whose duty it was to serve him (telephone operators, shop assistants, etc.) a strict observance of these universally accepted rules of conduct? Were a student of Theosophy to force his way into the private life of any of these individuals with the same "demands" that he makes from them as paid employés, it would be quite another matter; but so far as I can see, no such suggestion appears to have been made in the article referred to. It amounts to this: whether we are students of Theosophy or whether we are not, we are members of a community, and we must know that the conscientious performance of a public duty is a matter of simple public honesty, if nothing more. Being members of a community then, are we or are we not absolved from all responsibility in trying to uphold this honest standard, because we are students of Theosophy?

T. A.

ANSWER.—No, students of Theosophy are not justified in demanding from others any particular attitude toward life as a whole, but only toward that fragment of life for which they are responsible. It is not, for example, our duty to reform the language of others. It is our duty to see that vile language is not used in our presence. In just the same way, it is not our duty to reform the work of others, but it is our duty to see that work for which we are responsible and for which we pay, is properly performed. If we fail to do so, we thereby become participants in the carelessness, bad manners, or dishonesty which we condone. If everyone were to demand honest work and the faithful, courteous performance of service due, the world would be better and workmen happier.

J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—Doubtless we ought to exact from others the full performance of their duties, in so far as we are ourselves responsible for that performance. It is a corporal's duty to keep his squad in order. But it is not the duty of a private to appoint himself the judge of the weaknesses of his equals and superiors. Let him first discover all that can be known about his immediate duty and some day he may be promoted to be a corporal. Meanwhile, "the duty of another is full of danger".

V. S.

QUESTION No. 347.—*Several times in the past eight or ten years I have been wakened by three distinct raps on my bedroom door. These knocks have seemed to me to be unmistakably something out of the ordinary, different from the usual sounds of the night, in a class by themselves. Can I be right in so interpreting them, and if so what might be their significance?*

ANSWER.—We do not know what caused the knocks or whether that cause was inside or outside of the questioner's brain. The significance of such things, however, is what we choose to give them. They can, for example, be treated as a call to recollection, as one may profitably do with any other noise that awakes one in the night. J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—Certainly the questioner may be right in interpreting these knocks as "out of the ordinary"; their significance, however, on that basis, can be determined only by the person who was wakened by them. It would be legitimate to assume (always on the supposition that they were not nervous disturbances, reflected, in dream, as external knocks) that they were intended to wake the sleeper, either to help him register in his brain some inner and important experience of dream-life, or to protect him against the continuance of some demoralizing influence such as a lower type of dream can exercise.

E. T. H.

MAHLON D. BUTLER

Mahlon D. Butler, an old and valued member of The Theosophical Society, and at one time a member of the Executive Committee, died at the home of his son, in Indianapolis, on March 16th, in his 88th year. His advanced age had made it impossible for him, during recent years, to attend the annual Conventions of the Society, of which he became a member in November, 1892; but he always contributed a letter of greeting, and always kept in touch with his old friends at Headquarters. He was a loyal supporter of W. Q. Judge, who knew him well, and who often spoke, with high regard, of his integrity, and inherent fidelity of nature. Freed from the burden of the flesh, he has joined the ranks of the unseen "Army of the Lord", to fight for the Cause he loved, and to reinforce the efforts of those who survive him.

He is mourned also by the Grand Army of the Republic, of which he was Adjutant-General in 1920–21, and by his Brethren of the Scottish Rite, among whom he ranked as Honorary Member of the Supreme Council, 33°.